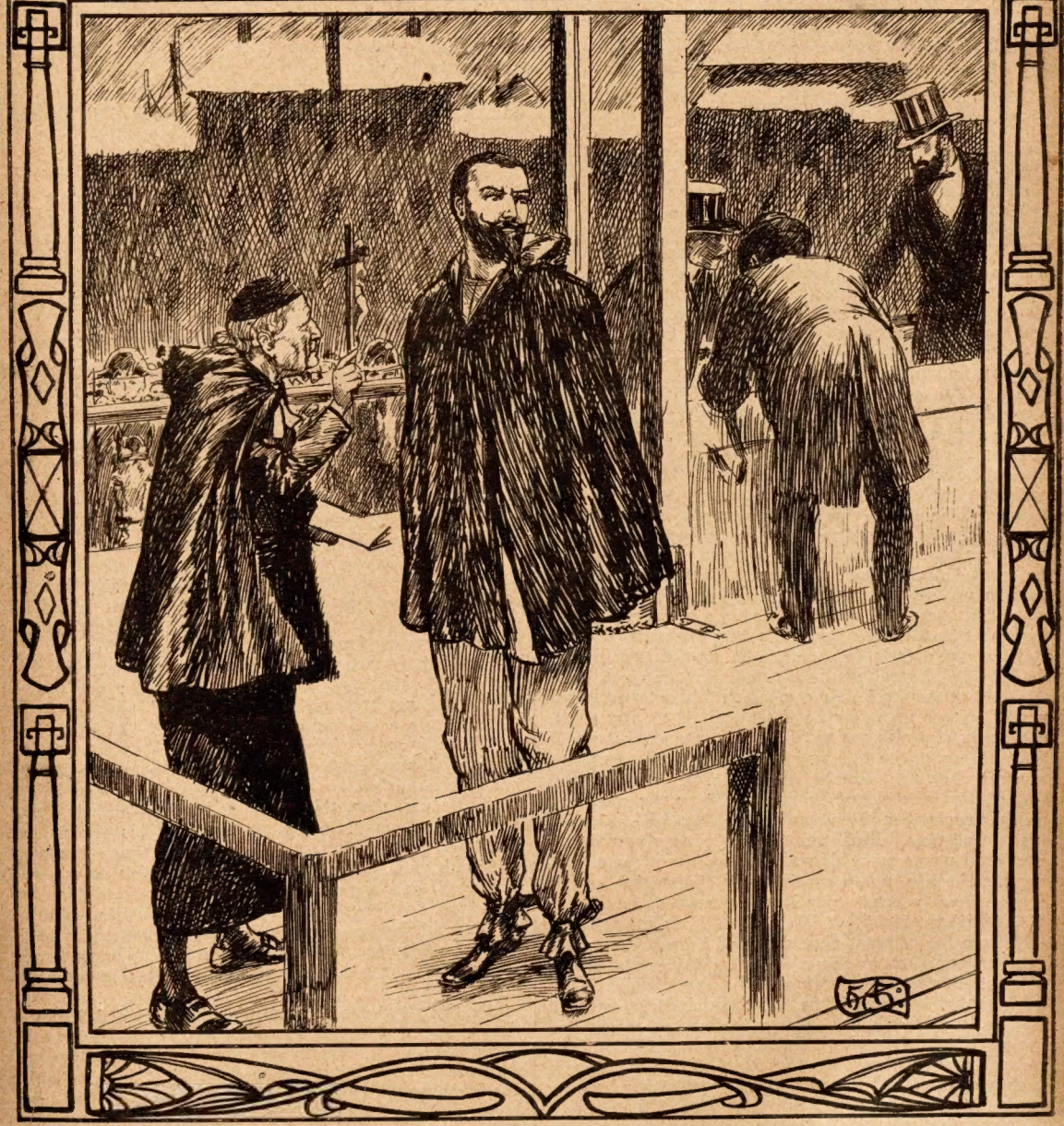
POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

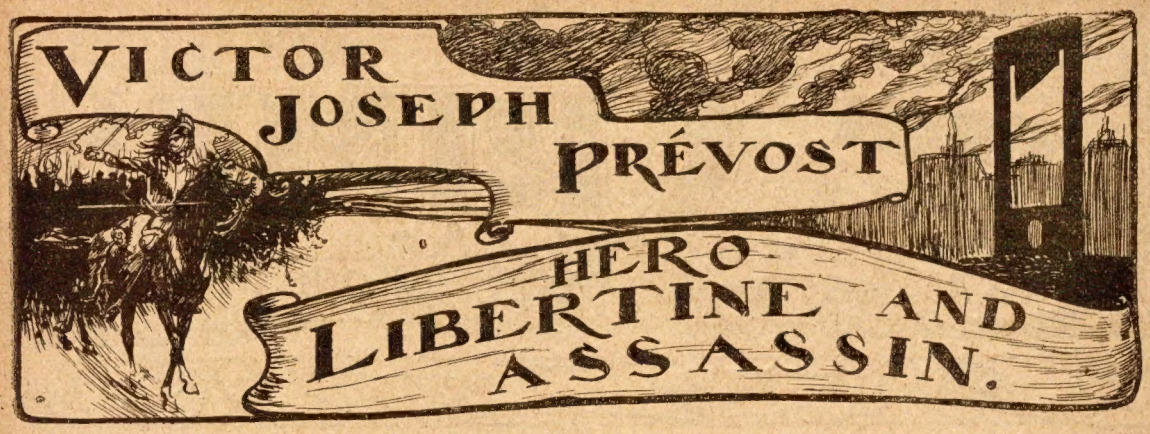
PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY



PREVOST ON THE SCAFFOLD.

Vol. IV.—No. 48.



"He drains off life by drops, and, deaf to cries,
Examines every spirit as it flies;
He studies torment, dives in mortal woe,
To rouse up every pang repeats his blow."

—YOUNG, "On Michael Angelo's Famous Piece of the Crucifixion."

PART III.

IN France, especially in criminal cases, the action of the law is much slower than in this country, and there are many weary weeks—sometimes several months—before a prisoner really knows what is to become of him. He has so many (apparent) possibilities of escape from death, although (actually), in such a case as Prévost's, there was but a very remote chance. In fact, nothing could come between him and the guillotine but a positive proof of insanity. Yet, in spite of his confession and his undisputed guilt of both murders, he had to take his trial and preliminary examination just the same as another with whom there might be a possibility of innocence. The ex-Cent-Garde was lodged in the prison of Mazas, and, it having come to the governor's ears that the man had threatened to commit suicide, he was placed in a double cell. This is customary when the charge against a prisoner is of exceptional gravity. The other criminal who was given him as a companion was a jovial fellow, who had committed numberless thefts, and was well known by all the gaolers, for he spent half his time at Mazas. He called himself a "prison swallow," because he boasted of coming there regularly every winter, declaring that the bread was better than what he got in the army, the soup was better cooked, and the air purer in the cells of the great prison than in the Paris lodgings where the poor went for the night.

It is certain that this companion had a good effect upon Prévost's mind, for he was permitted to play cards, chaff, and joke with the murderer in a manner that would astonish our prison authorities. But Prévost's great joy was the visits paid him by M. Macé, the detective, who was mainly instrumental in wringing from the miserable man the confession of the murder of Mdlle. Adèle Blondin, his late mistress. Macé would seem to have exercised a wonderful power over this man, almost, if not quite, hypnotic, and made such a careful study of him that he was at one time inclined to believe the man to be insane. This Macé put plainly to his chief, M. Caubet, declaring that from the constant observation of Prévost during the time he had been in prison he thought a mental illness or want of mental equilibrium was present, which might mitigate his sentence if he were examined by medical experts, and their evidence given before the judges and jury at the trial. M. Caubet, however, would not hear of such a suggestion. He told Macé not to interfere in such a manner, and that, sane or insane, such a monster would be better removed from off the face of the earth.

Macé who, stern and inflexible in his duties, was really at heart one of the kindest of men, was more than ever determined to investigate the condition of Prévost's mind, and during the whole time that he remained in prison (which period covered no less than 96 days) Macé visited him at least three times a week.

Many of their interviews were most touching, and it is certain Prévost had a staunch friend in the person of the famous detective. I have no space to describe them as explained to me by M. Macé at the time, nor would they prove particularly interesting to my readers. But it is certain that the detective who took so much interest in this criminal was better able to judge of his state of mind than anybody who knew him.

It was towards the end of October, some six weeks after his arrest, that Prévost was one day visited by Macé, who found him in a very depressed state of mind. He was breathing heavily, and his face had a white and grey hue. He had evidently been suffering great mental agony. In answer to his visitor's inquiry as to what was the matter, he said in a low, weird tone:

"Ah, M. Macé, this is kind of you to come and see me! Not a soul—brothers, relations—none care what becomes of me. You are my only solace. But I cannot sleep. For the past three nights I have suffered agonies. I see in the dark my hands red with blood, and I can hear the voices of Adèle and Lenoble shrieking in my ears, and at the top of their voices they shout, 'Caught! caught! caught!' Then I awake, with the perspiration pouring from my forehead, and I leap on to the floor of my cell. It is then that I feel a resolution to take my own life, to dash my head against the wall; but something keeps me back, and I cannot move."

"You are afraid," observed Macé.

"Yes; so much afraid that I dare not—cannot. Only yesterday I prayed my companion there to take my life; but he refused."

There was, then, this cur—this butcher—who had no compunction, no hesitation, to slaughter his victims in cold blood, but so afraid to lay a hand upon himself, even although he must have known that his days were numbered, and if no inducements were offered him to commit suicide, certainly facilities were placed in his way.

How different to the means of prevention in our own prisons! They are of frequent occurrence in France, and a condemned man has little difficulty in taking his own life if so inclined.

On this very same occasion when Macé visited Prévost, the detective, as he was leaving, took out his gold watch to see the time. Prévost's eyes were fixed longingly upon it, and he expressed a desire to hold it in his hand. He said, as the timekeeper was handed to him, "I love to see and touch gold and silver. Those precious metals have a great attraction for me. Often I have stopped, lost in admiration, for hours before a jeweller's shop."

"But, how is it," said Macé, "that you have never been

in the habit of wearing rings, watches, or jewellery? That when you have bought such articles, I find you have sold them or given them away?"

"No," said Prévost dreamily; "the very possession of jewellery takes all the value away from it for me. I long for it, but the moment it is mine I care for it no more."

"That, then, is the same with your mistresses, I suppose?" remarked the detective.

"Precisely. Adèle Blondin would not have died had she not been so affectionate. She was a leech—she wanted me all to herself. It was impossible. She disturbed my duties, and I wanted to be free. The man who takes a mistress has the right to leave her. Adèle wanted to marry me. That could not be."

"Yes," said Macé; "but that did not justify you in chopping up your victims like butchers' meat."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed the ex-Cent-Garde. "I have at least been humane. The man and the woman did not suffer. When I am dead, what does it matter to me if I am cut in pieces? They were quite dead when I 'worked' on them."

Macé watched the man narrowly as this conversation was going on in the cell, and he felt inclined to believe that his theory of insanity must have some foundation. The murderer's face as he spoke seemed transfigured. His eyes were very wide open, with a vacant stare, as if he were looking at his past crimes, his voice was steady and strong, and everything in him denoted the savage brute. He had no compunction for his crimes, no feeling of regret for how he had served his victims. He thought only of himself, now a prisoner deprived of luxuries of food and women.

Macé tells me that upon that afternoon, when he went back to his office, thinking of this extraordinary criminal, he took from his drawer the different photographs of Prévost, as soldier, policeman, civilian, and as a criminal. Then studying the face carefully, he could not find any of the signs which ordinarily show the man who kills for the mere pleasure of killing.

In spite of M. Caubet's desire to quickly bring Prévost to the place of execution the time went on until he had been at Mazas for upwards of three months. The last time Macé saw him before his judgment was on December 6, at the Conciergerie. Every person who has to go before the Assizes is brought from Mazas to this, the oldest of prisons of Paris, some days before the trial. There they are interrogated by the President of the Assizes before their appearance in court. M. Hardouin had the trial of this man, a judge of great reputation for his sternness and impartiality, but of a very kind disposition.

Prévost was so nervous that he could scarcely answer a question, and it was found necessary to arrange a second interview. He was just as helpless when interviewed by the counsel who had been appointed to defend him Macé had charge of Prévost at the Conciergerie, and told him to make a clean breast of everything to M. Bouchot, who was acting for him.

"Yes, I know," replied Prévost; "but in his presence I cannot find my words—my head is empty, and I do not know what I am saying." And then, speaking in broken sentences, he continued, "I have got the fever. Let me be tried now—now; I am counting the hours. Oh, my judges! I feel death is coming—I feel already a dead man!"

Macé tried to reassure him, and told him to be a man, and face the ordeal through which he had to pass. But this butcher—this once brave soldier of the Emperor's Body-guard—was as a frightened woman—a child about to be whipped.

When he caught sight of a bunch of chrysanthemums that Macé had upon his table, and his eyes were fixed upon them, the detective asked him if he would like to take some to his cell.

"Only two," he replied.

"Choose," said Macé; and he took a yellow and a white one.

"Gold and silver," said the detective, smiling.

"No, a souvenir," said Prévost, with a sigh.

"Happy?" came the question.

"Yes, very happy," said Prévost, gazing at the two flowers in his hand. "Yes, I did love her—that one"—pointing to the golden flower.

"Does she still live?" asked Macé.

"I do not know," was the sad reply; and tears came into this great savage's eyes, and trickled down his cheeks.

What unfathomable secrets were within that murderer's breast?

Such was the life this man spent in prison. How

He took a yellow and a white one.

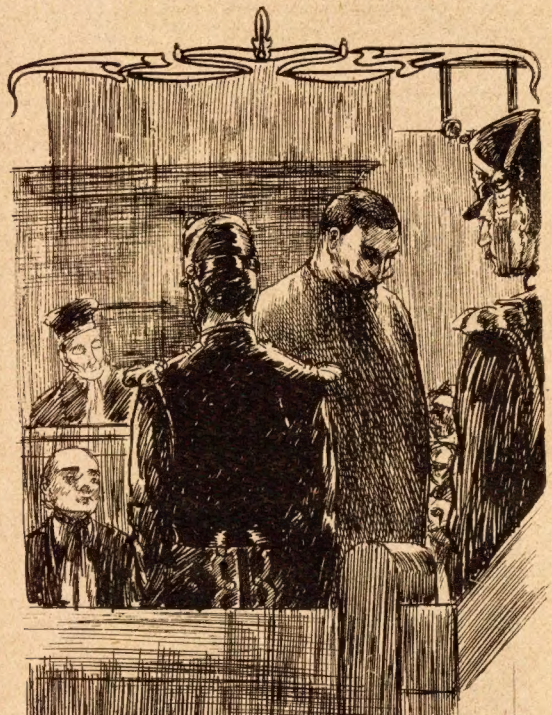
strange to that of a criminal awaiting formal trial for murder in this country! Macé gave him money very frequently to purchase better food, and constantly visited him, giving him slight hope.

At length the day for the trial came. So great an interest did it create that special orders were issued to prevent overcrowding of the court, and to allow only barristers, witnesses, journalists, and those concerned in the trial admittance. I was fortunate in getting a place amongst the pressmen, and shall never forget the appearance of the court upon that occasion. In spite of the orders which were issued by the Minister of Justice, the benches were forcibly taken by a crowd of people, principally of the fair sex, from second and third-rate theatres and music-halls, who came evidently to show off their latest dresses and to laugh and joke during the pro-

ceedings. The seats reserved for the Press were beseiged, those for the barristers and advocates were invaded by a motley crowd, and even some of the magistrates had to find places behind the judge.

On the table before the jury were placed a vase, which I knew contained the head of Mdlle. Blondin, the great piece of iron belonging to the coupling of a railway carriage, with which both victims had been rendered insensible, the knife with which Lenoble had been cut up, and the chopper with which the murderer had hacked and disjointed the corpse of his mistress and that of the jeweller. There was also the box which Prévost had used as a block whilst engaged in his butchery, and the plaid shawl which belonged to the dead woman.

It is December 8, 1879, when we are assembled in the



Not a muscle in his face moves.

Courts of Justice, not so much for the purpose of hearing the eloquence of counsel, for there is no defence, and the whole formality (as it is nothing more nor less) will be over in a few hours; but we are there out of a morbid curiosity to see this man who has been one of the most conspicuous beings in Paris. We are all anxious to see how he looks, how he deports himself, and how he will receive the verdict. We are, too, not a little curious to know how it will be possible for M. Bouchot to plead for the prisoner.

The crowd is enormous in court, and the buzzing of voices so incessant that it is a relief to the ears when M. le President enters the great room and silence is observed.

Before eleven o'clock Prévost is conducted into the court, under an escort of gendarmes. He has evidently borrowed the military gait once again from his guard, for he walks firmly and keeps step with them perfectly.

There is a murmur from the audience as the ex-Cent-Garde takes a seat, surrounded by eight of the Gardes Républieains. The prisoner turns his back upon the people when he is called upon to stand and hear the act of accusation read to him by the clerk of the court. There is a stern, fearless expression upon his face, and his brown hair is parted neatly in the middle, whilst the beard that he has grown suits the face admirably. Indeed, with his snow-white shirt-front and cuffs, his collar cut low, and a bright silk handkerchief tied loosely round his neck, he might well be taken for an artist of some note.

Keeping his eyes half-closed, he listens attentively to the charges brought against him in all their hideous details. These I need not repeat here; my readers are well acquainted with the ghastly performances of this monster, once the favourite of his regiment and of all the women who knew him, old and young.

The effect of the recital of his fearful crimes upon those in court is very marked, and one or two of the ladies who have come to be amused are taken out in a fainting condition, feeling sick at the sight of the instruments and the remains of the poor murdered woman.

Without emotion of any kind, Prévost confesses before the public to his crimes. The President, amongst other questions, asks him the following, and his reply is always in a firm, yet mournful voice: "Prisoner, you acknowledge the facts mentioned in the act of accusation?" "Yes." "You are the author of the two crimes committed under circumstances almost identical?" "Yes." "You confess to the murder, the premeditation of them, the ambush laid for your victims—everything, in short, as described?" "Yes."

Then the terrible photographs of the seventy-eight pieces of the body of Lenoble, the jeweller, and that of his head, are handed to the jury, and they pass them round, whilst the sickening sight of some of the man's skin, his intestines, and the portions of the head of the woman, which has during the three years since her death fallen into decay, are shown. A shudder goes through the court. It is a terrible sight and a sickening subject to dwell upon.

Then the Advocate-General addressed the court. Speaking of the horror of the murders and the butchery of Prévost, he proceeded to make a sketch of the murderer's life, who had brought disgrace upon the uniform of the soldier and the police, whilst he had outraged society and placed himself in an awful position towards man and his God. He declared that these crimes, confessed to by the prisoner, had for their motives the love on his part for money, and to obtain it he murdered his victims with a cruelty which tended to aggravate the deed and make it dastardly in its perpetration. There could not possibly be extenuating circumstances, and since the arrest public opinion had clearly pointed to the punishment he must suffer.

Prévost listened to this speech, which was so terrible in its denunciation of the man, with an impassibility that could only have been gained by his early military training; and then M. Bouchot, his advocate, rises to address the jury, and there is a whisper through the audience which shows what an interest there is taken in the defence.

With great eloquence, M. Bouchot tells the story of the young soldier's early life, of his lowly birth, and struggle for position. How, when a youth, he was half-starved, and his unfortunate position ruined the prisoner's disposition by planting seeds of discontent and bitterness in his susceptible nature—seeds which were to develop in an unnatural manner later on. He calls attention to his acts of courage whilst in the army, to his medals, and to the admiration bestowed upon him by all who knew him. With the greatest eloquence he tries to persuade the jury that the prisoner before them is made up of that which is half-good, half-bad, and that the methods adopted in the committal of the crimes go to prove that he was not at the time in his right mind. It is a pa-

thetic address, and M. Bouchot ends it by begging the jury to find with their verdict extenuating circumstances.

The President then sums up the case, speaking impartially, placing all the facts clearly before the jury, and pointing out the good as well as the bad points of the prisoner.

At 5.30 the jury retire, and their deliberation is short. At five minutes to six they return, bringing a verdict of "Guilty, without extenuating circumstances."

Victor Joseph Prévost is then condemned to death. Not a muscle of his face moves; but, with a firm, military step, he marches away between his guards to his cell.

I could write chapters about Victor Prévost's life in prison would space permit, for that which I had no possibility of gleaning from observation I learned from M. Macé, who was constantly in the murderer's presence, and, as I have said, took a great interest in the wretched man; but it might weary my readers.

His counsel made the formal appeal within the prescribed three days; but it was refused, and so the condemned man was transferred to the prison of La Roquette from the Conciergerie, where there is little hope of reprieve. Still, he had hope, for his barrister advised him to address the President of the Republic, and the following letter was sent by the prisoner.

"MONSIEUR LE PRESIDENT,—Condemned to death by the Assizes Court, I beg to ask for mercy. I hope you will do me the favour to receive and hear my counsel, M. Bouchot.—I have the honour to be, M. le Président, Your very humble servant,

"VICTOR JOSEPH PREVOST."

From that day his manner changed. He became sullen and morose. I saw him once only after that before the execution, and he was like an old man of sixty—eyes sunken, face pinched, and the very picture of agony. Hope had left him, and he had to resign himself to his fate, which was fixed for January 19.

It was undoubtedly a morbid kind of feeling that prompted me to do my utmost to get "behind the scenes" during the execution of this famous criminal. I had no direct business there; but I had witnessed executions in several provincial towns of England, I had spent some awful moments in the presence of condemned criminals within the prisons of Newgate and Horsemonger Lane, and I desired to learn how they managed these things in France. So, by the courtesy of one or two legal friends and pressmen whom I knew, and the kindness of M. Macé, who to the finish was most particularly concerned in the arrest, examination, and final scene in which Prévost played the leading part, I managed to arrange that I should be present.

I never wish to be so intimately associated with an execution in France again. This January 19, 1880, will always remain a red-letter day in my life—literally a red-letter day, for there was blood in reality, and blood-shedding in the crimes perpetrated by Prévost that were sufficient to sicken any man of strong nerve, let him be ever so callous.

It was a cold, bright winter's morning, and when I arrived at the prison of La Roquette the executioner, Deibler, had already arrived, and was signing the customary receipt in the gaol-book for the condemned man, which reads as follows:

"On the 19th day of January, in the year 1880, a man imprisoned here, named Victor Joseph Prévost, has been given into my hands, as executioner, in pursuance of an order of M. the Procureur-General, dated the 19th of January, 1880.—DIEBLER."

The next thing to do was for the Governor of the prison to hand over the living body to the executioner, whose property he became until life was extinct. In silence Deibler, his assistants, the Governor, and a privileged few, marched off to the wretched man's cell. As the turnkey undid the double lock and a guard took up their positions on either side of the door, I could see the ex-Cent-Garde. He was standing on his bed, and his face was fearful to behold. There was that look of mingled expectation and despair which flickering hope can only produce. And his hope was flickering indeed. A few words from the Governor was to let the last ray of hope out from his heart. The working of his features as the Governor entered and the prisoner caught sight of the executioner (whom everybody knew by sight in Paris) and his assistants, was agonising. The Governor in a firm, loud voice, addressed him:

"Prévost, your appeal to the President of the Republic has been refused. Your last hour has come." (Here the condemned man closed his eyes, and uttered an awful groan—so strange and unearthly that it is in my ears now when I think of it.) "You have been a soldier. I hope you will die with a soldier's courage."

The prisoner's white lips moved, but there was no utterance for a time. Then, with a supreme effort, he found a hollow voice, and replied, "Yes, yes; I will walk without assistance."

It all seemed like a scene from a drama upon the stage: The condemned man standing upon the bed, with the light from the cell window falling directly upon his pale face, as he remained in fixed attitude, with his arms folded; the prison chaplain, the Abbé Crozer, standing between him and the executioner; the guards at the door, at attention; and the four warders, two at head and foot of the bed. If the scene had been rehearsed for a month, the grouping could not have been more perfect.

Prévost then stepped from the low couch, upon which he had lain for so many terrible nights, and proceeded to finish dressing himself; for when the executioner was admitted he was attired only in his trousers and shirt.

Then all, even the warders, withdrew, with the exception of the abbé, and the door was gently closed, leaving the holy man and the miserable wretch who had so unscrupulously shed his fellow-creatures' blood alone together. What passed between them during that five minutes nobody will ever know. It is certain that he received absolution, and that the priest had "ministered to a mind diseased," for Prévost's countenance was greatly changed, and there was now an expression of resignation.

During this brief interview the scene outside the cell in the corridor had been very active. The magistrates, officials, executioner, and assistants, and those privileged got into position and the door was thrown open.

What a transformation! The ex-Cent-Garde was before us once more. You might have imagined him to be upon the drilling-ground. His countenance was serene, he walked to the position assigned him in the procession with a firm step, and head erect, towering high above all of us. It must have been a tremendous effort; or was it the magic words of the venerable abbé that had wrought this marvellous change in the man in these few moments? Prévost was himself once more—the dashing cuirassier, the lady-killer in its happiest meaning, the smart, handsome sergent-de-ville—in fact, the criminal was suddenly transformed into the "bel homme." I could scarcely believe that this was the same man whom I had seen on December 24, when he was literally broken down, groaning, and lamenting in his cell.

Making our way down the corridor, there is a halt made outside a roomy apartment, which is known as the "chambre de la toilette." This is the last station at which the condemned man calls before he stops at the place where he finally departs from this life. The priest continues to read from the "Passion," whilst Deibler and his assistants perform their duties. Prévost sits in a chair, and the executioner proceeds to strap his arms and legs. In a careless style, the condemned man says, "No need to tie my legs. I wish to walk in military style to

the place of execution." But Deibler heeds him not, although I fancy he gave him more play for his legs in walking than is customary. During this operation, the ex-Cent-Garde bows his head, and appears very thoughtful. What was he thinking of? The stirring scenes in battle during the Italian campaign, the hundred and one amours, the glittering scenes at the Tuileries, when he had been on duty during a ball? Certainly not of his unfortunate victims. Perhaps he was thinking of the golden-haired girl of whom the yellow chrysanthemum given to him by M. Macé reminded him.

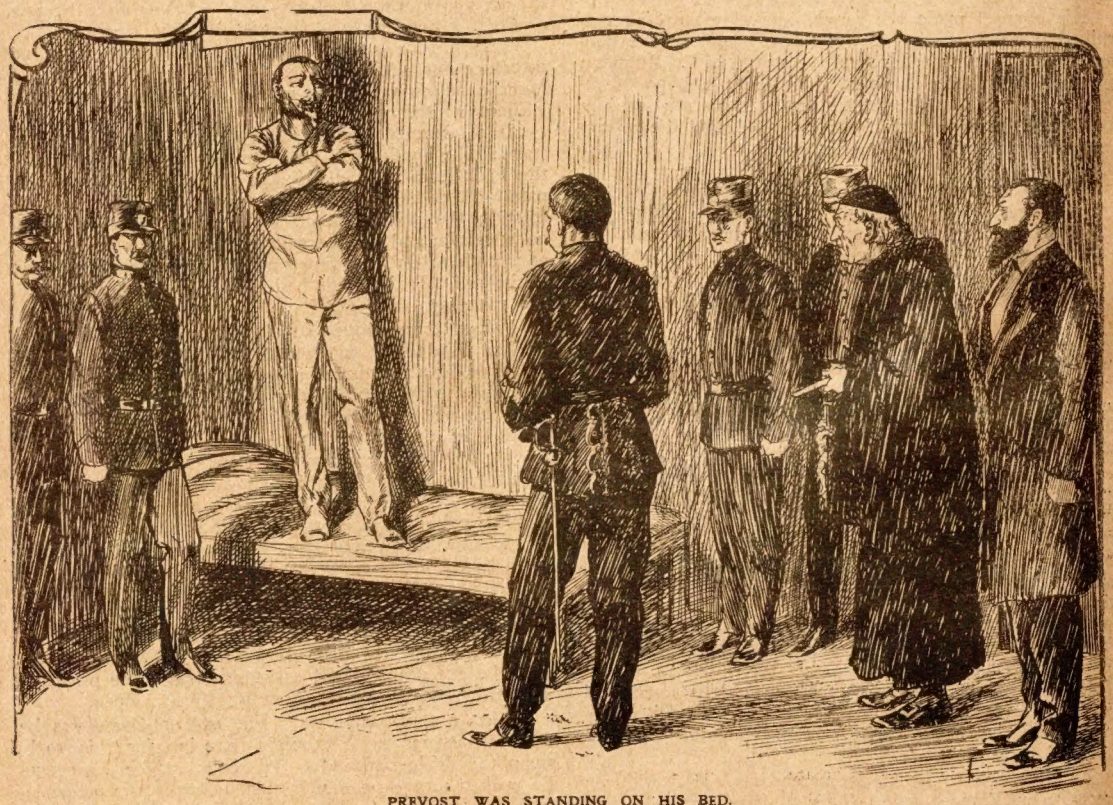
Deibler's work was finished, and Prévost rose without assistance, and, disposing of his thoughts with a long-drawn sigh, continued the melancholy procession, the Abbé Crozer chanting as we stepped slowly forward. It was bitterly cold, and one of the assistants threw a thick cloak over the shoulders of the man. It seemed a strange thing to do, but kind withal, to keep the warmth in the body of a man who was to be in a few minutes grasped in the icy hand of Death.

We crossed the large yard at three minutes to seven, and halted at the big gates, which were slowly thrown open. It revealed the horrible sight of the scaffold and guillotine. The mounted gendarmes, cloaked and with swords drawn, made the scene somewhat less awful, and the shouting and singing of the crowd outside made one think whether we were about to enter a fair or look upon a terrible instrument of death. As we approached the machine there was a lull in the noise from the multitude.

Prévost, in spite of the cords, which somewhat impeded his progress, without effort, without emotion, walked with slow yet firm steps and stood erect before the machine, and gazed fearlessly down at the crowd, and his lip seemed to curl, and I could almost fancy I could hear him say to them, "Look at me. I do not tremble—see. I am not afraid."

But the crowd hooted and hissed, and gave expression to obscene and filthy language. I have seen the British public before the Newgate and Horsemonger Lane Gaols disgracing themselves with their boisterous behaviour and unseasonable humour, but never was there such a crowd in this country as that which had foregathered to see the exit of "le bel homme."

In spite of the orders to keep the day and hour of the execution secret, it had leaked out in some way. The whole space around the Châtelet was crowded with people by midnight—men drunk, prostitutes of all classes, young work-girls, men in blouses and sabots, and frock-coated gents in top-hats were mingled together. The Parisian gamin was particularly in evidence, these urchins perched in trees or on any eminence they could find, screeching, imitating all kinds of animals, and now and again bursting into a familiar refrain known as the air



PREVOST WAS STANDING ON HIS BED.

of the "Lampions," to which they fitted in the words "Le Cent-Garde—le Cent-Garde."

To add to their enjoyment, about two o'clock in the morning the snow commenced to fall thickly, and the immense crowd, which hourly became greater, were packed like frozen sardines in the Place de la Roquette, their heads whitened with the snow that had fallen, looking the very emblems of death in the gaslight that was flickering in the wind.

Roasted chestnuts, hot wine, fish, sausages and bread, nips of cognac, and even glasses of absinthe were readily vended, and the hawkers must have made a tremendous harvest. The whole of the population of La Chapelle and neighbourhood were there—many of them once sweethearts of "le bel homme," and it was only the excitement and the artificial warmth from the drinks they took so freely, and being so closely packed, that enabled them to stand throughout that exceedingly cold winter night.

And what for? To see their ex-idol suffer the last

penalty of the law. To watch the spirt of blood from his decapitated trunk, and to glory in the sight of it.

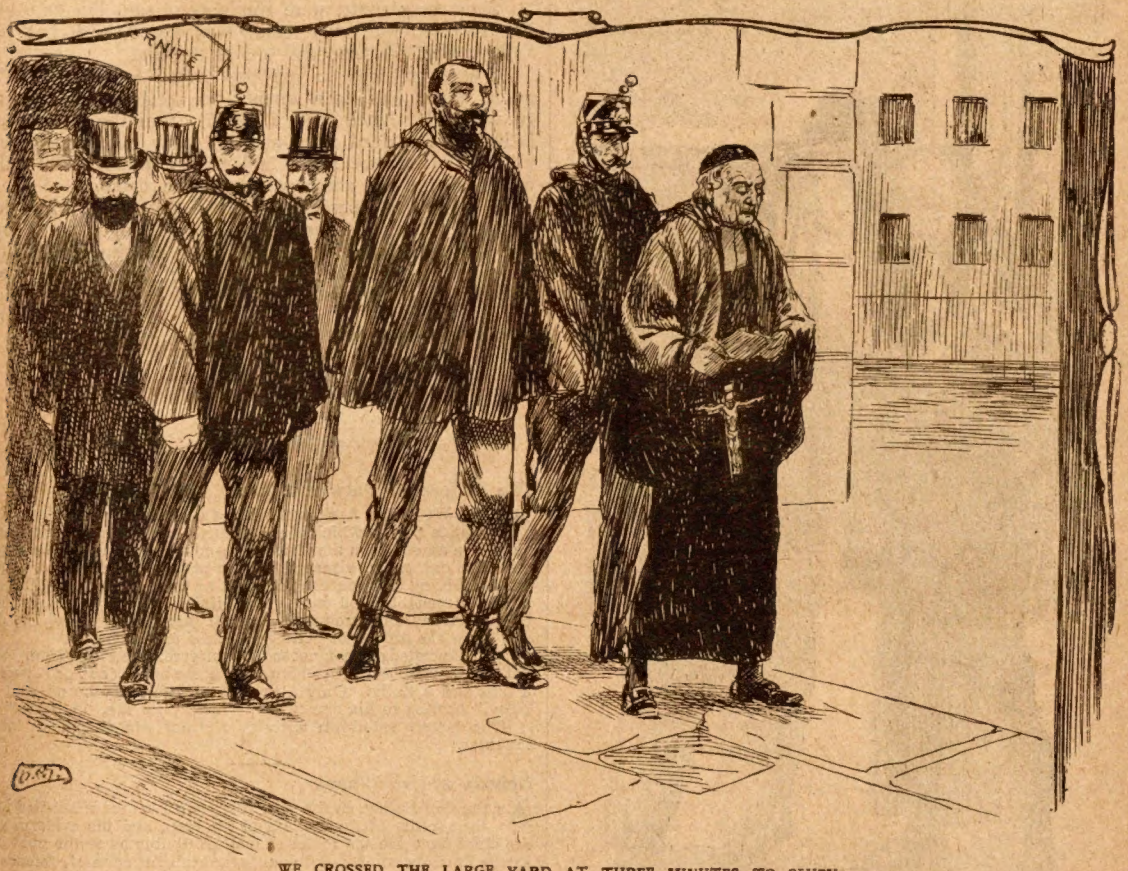
As I stood aside and watched this enormous crowd in the grey light of the early morning, I could see but a short span between the evil dispositions of that crowd and the condemned man.

Both loved blood, and would revel in the sight of it.

Such was the scene that I have endeavoured to describe which met Victor Prévost's gaze when he mounted the platform, upon which was erected the guillotine, that murderous-looking implement that rarely fails to strike awe to the ordinary individual, but seemed to leave untouched the emotions of this man.

What could he be? Was the man really diseased in mind, or was it the assumed calmness and bravado that it with disdain, and the scornful turn of his lip told more than words. But when the voices picked up the refrain, "Le voilà Nicolas, Ah! ah! ah!" and the swinging refrain spread over the dense multitude Prévost was enraged, and his face was a study. The soldier, the polite policeman, the wooing civilian had all vanished; he was the beast. There was the same expression in his eyes which came when he murdered Adèle Blondin and M. Lenoble, and I was sure that, had he the opportunity, he would have slaughtered all without more compunction than when he took the life of his two victims.

The animal passion flashed from his eyes, and a terrible expression took possession of his countenance; and then the venerable abbé held the cross before him, to take his attention from his enemies, the crowd who jeered at



WE CROSSED THE LARGE YARD AT THREE MINUTES TO SEVEN.

can only be shown by the hardened brute? I was thinking this out when the murderer stood facing his great audience. It was his first and last appearance upon such a stage, and although he had created such a popularity by his handsome bearing, had broken so many hearts, and posed as such a cavalier, even the vicious crowd, which constituted the vast audience before him, yelled, shrieked, hooted, and sang in chorus the then popular street song of Paris:

"Le voilà Nicolas (Here is Nicolas)
Ah! ah! ah!"

to the swinging refrain, which was caught up on all sides by the scum of Paris, conversant with all the fearful crimes of the French capital, all drawn there by the scent of blood.

Even this cold-blooded murderer looked down upon these lovers of blood without the responsibility of spilling him but once could not laud him high enough in their admiration.

But Prévost waved the emblem of salvation away from him, and stooped down and gently kissed the forehead of the priest. It was a voluntary, pretty act, that brought tears to many an eye of those who were present.

"My poor family! When you see my brother, tell him——" This in an almost inaudible voice to the chaplain.

Then Deibler's assistants advanced. There was a welcome but painful hush in the voices of the crowd. Prévost stood like a statue. One man took off the cloak which had been covering his shoulders, another stepped forward and firmly but gently pressed him between the shoulders until he came into contact with the sliding board which is used to place the head.

Deibler then stepped forward quickly and pressed two springs. One closed the top part of the board and held the head secure, the other released the great triangular

knife, and, with a dull sound, which found an echo in almost every heart, it descended and the head of "le bel homme" rolled into the basket of sawdust. Like butchers in the shambles, with as much coolness as Prévost betrayed in his murders, the assistants rolled the body into a great basket, the head being turned in with it.

I could have sworn that before this was done I saw the eyelids twitch, the nose dilate two or three times, and the lips once more scornfully curl; and I was right, for my observations were confirmed by some of the surgical experts who were present.

But this was not all. M. Macé touched me on the shoulder, and whispered in my ear, "Having seen so much, you had better see the finish. I am under orders

Gently kissed the forehead of the priest.

to see the corpse properly delivered from the hands of the executioner now that he has fulfilled his duties."

The head was quickly thrown into the basket, with the trunk, the lid closed, and the still bleeding and gory burden, leaving its trail of blood upon the boards and steps of the scaffold, carried down and hurriedly placed in a cart. The gendarmes rode through the crowd to make an opening, and Macé, the Abbé Crozer, and others, including myself, followed at a gallop, the crowd again singing at the top of their voices:

"Le voilà Nicolas,
Ah! ah! ah!"

whilst they yelled and shrieked derision over the bleeding body of the late ex-Cent-Garde.

Our way led through the Place de la Bastille, Boulevard de la Contrescarpe, Pont d'Austerlitz, Boulevard de l'Hôpital, Place d'Italie, and the Avenue d'Ivry, entering the cemetery of the last-named.

All was so quickly accomplished that we were at the journey's end at a quarter to eight, less than two hours from the time that the executioner had claimed his subject in the cell. We were at that part of the cemetery reserved for those who have been executed, for the French do not believe in the unhealthy practice of burying in the precincts of the prison.

Near the grave is a plain deal coffin, into which Deibler's assistants transfer the corpse, placing the head between the legs.

The executioners' work is done, and, with a bow and a "Bon jour, messieurs," they retire.

Short very short, were the prayers said by the Abbé Crozer when the rough coffin was closed, with but two nails, one at the head and one at the foot.

I was prepared to see the corpse lowered into he grave which had been opened to receive it. Instead of which M. Macé read a permit from the nearest relatives of the dead man, and the body was immediately placed in the cart again and driven quietly off to the amphitheatre of anatomy, where the doctors subjected it to the same operations he had performed upon his victims, but in this case in the interest of science, and not for the possession of gold and allaying that thirst for blood which was characteristic of "le bel homme," Victor Joseph Prévost, libertine and assassin, but once the smartest-looking man amongst the Parisian police and the pride of the Cent-Gardes.

THE END.

The Difference Between Them.

At the Worcester Assizes in 1883 a case was tried before Mr. Justice Day in which plaintiff sued the defendant for money paid for a horse which the former alleged was unsound. A clergyman was one of the witnesses for the plaintiff, and gave a somewhat rambling and confused account of the transaction. Defendant's counsel bullied him unmercifully, which increased his confusion and embarrassment, and at last said: "Now, sir, do you know the difference between a horse and a cow?"

"I acknowledge my ignorance," answered the clergyman. "I hardly know the difference between a horse and a cow, or between a bull and a bully. Only a bull, I am told, has horns, and a bully," bowing to his questioner, "luckily for me, has none."

The lawyer sat down without another word amidst loud laughter.

Nobody at the Wheel.

At the Old Bailey, in the year 1827, two Lascars were tried for the murder of the captain of the ship, and the evidence of the chief mate seemed to set at rest all doubts as to the guilt of the two prisoners. Mr. Adolphus, the eminent counsel, defended the accused men, having gained quite a reputation for nautical knowledge, which he had picked up in his younger days when a sailor on board a merchantman, and before taking to the law as a profession. He severely cross-examined the chief mate, who in his evidence had said that there was great confusion and excitement on board at the time of the murder, the ship being in great danger, and necessitating all the attention of the crew to prevent her driving on the rocks.

Adolphus asked such a multitude of questions as to the exact number of the crew, where each man was, what he was doing during this perilous period, etc., that the judge at last said: "I suppose, Mr. Adolphus, these questions are quite relevant? I must admit I do not see it," evidently thinking that the learned counsel was wasting the time of the court.

"Just bear with me a few minutes longer, my lord, if you please," replied Mr. Adolphus, and went on asking questions as to the special duty each member of the crew was performing, the witness eventually accounting for every man on board, the captain being in his cabin, and the prisoners murdering him. Then Adolphus looked steadily at the witness, and said in a loud and searching tone, "Then who was at the helm?" The miserable mate at this question fell down in a fit, and on his recovery confessed that he himself was the murderer. In his perjured evidence he had given each man his position and had forgotten the most important, or, at least, had left none to fill it. The accused were acquitted and the mate was duly executed.

THE WAYS OF THE CRIMINAL

XXXIII.—HOW ANARCHISTS IDENTIFY THEMSELVES.

ENGLAND, the land of the free, is the home of the Anarchist, or one of the homes, for America, also the land of the free, is another country which welcomes these bloodthirsty folk to its shores. Daily the disreputable and desperate alien is dumped on our shores, some of them to settle down in London, others to pass through on their way to New York. From France, Belgium, Italy, and Russia, as well as from Spain and Switzerland, these men are expelled in large numbers. Once they become known as Anarchists their only resting-places on the Continent are the various penal establishments. They are given the alternative of prison or expulsion, and, of course, most of them are expelled. When they are put across the frontier the police of another country take them in hand, and so the merry game goes on until they find their way to London or New York and—peace.

1. The emblem of a literary "comrade." 2. A brother of the anvil. 3. Speaks for itself.

In those great cities they can plot to their hearts' content. The police know of their presence, but take no notice of them—in fact they treat them with contempt. It is, perhaps, for this reason that Anarchist outrages are unknown in this country and the United States. Anarchists are much too cute to turn their hosts against them, and, knowing that an outrage in England or the U.S.A. would close the doors of those countries to them, they confine their attentions strictly to Continental countries.

When a European monarch is assassinated it is safe to say that the plot was hatched in London or New York, and that the order for the murder went forth from one of the two cities named.

The assassinations of the King of Italy and the Empress of Austria were arranged in New York, some of the conspirators having journeyed from London to take part in the plotting, and doubtless all the outrages, or most of them, in recent years have emanated from the men who find refuge in these cities.

The police on the Continent have huge volumes containing complete descriptions of every known Anarchist, and these descriptions follow the men as they move from one country to another. If an Anarchist leaves France and crosses into the dominions of the Kaiser, the German police are at once apprised of his presence by the French authorities, and, owing to the description afforded by the latter, are quickly able to find their man and keep him under observation.

1. The bursting bomb. 2. Lantern. 3. Crossed spade and axe. 4 Bomb.

Nowadays the description of a criminal is of the minutest description. Under the Bertillon system various parts of the body are measured and finger-prints are taken. Thus it is the easiest possible matter to identify a criminal once he has been convicted. Of course, Anarchists are dealt with much in the same way, but the police have found that it is almost unnecessary to take note of such minute details.

Nearly every Anarchist known to the police makes his identification a most easy matter by tattooing some device into his flesh.

Some of these devices are of the gloomiest description, and from their nature the character of the man who wears them can almost invariably be guessed. Thus the man who on his shoulder bears a device composed of a torch and a pen crossed is known as one who, whilst being a violent revolutionary, confines himself to inciting others to commit deeds of violence. The same may be said of the man whose "coat of arms" is a lantern, and who fondly imagines that his writings shed an intense light upon the "evil state of society." It may here be remarked that the tattoo marks we are describing are taken from police records, and are all worn by known Anarchists. Of course, there are many people in the world who wear tattoo marks who are not Anarchists, such as sailors and others who have a craze for disfiguring the work of nature, and it must be understood that we are not referring to such people as these; only to those who have come under the notice of the police in connection with some plot or other.

1. The Phrygian cap with wreath. 2. Fire and sword. 3. Tree and axe.

A picture of a Phrygian Cap (the emblem of revolution) surrounded by a wreath is a favourite device, whilst the man who wears a crown pierced with a fearsome dagger, and also surrounded by a laurel wreath is known to be one of the most dangerous Anarchists living. The tattoo mark plainly shows what his desires are. Not a bit less bloodthirsty is the man who sports a dagger and a torch, whilst he who has adorned his body with a large picture of a bursting bomb is pretty certain sooner or later to end his days on the scaffold.

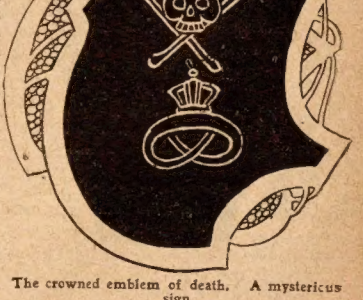
It is not the thinking Anarchist who wears the devices, but the fanatical enthusiast—the man who does things without stopping to think of the consequences, the poor fool of a tool who runs his head into the noose at the bidding of the arch-criminals who arrange the murder from the secure obscurity of some garret or other, and against whom the police can get no evidence. The officers of the law are pretty sure of the men who instigated the crime, but from the fact that the actual perpetrator, glorying in his deed, keeps silence, are unable to get the evidence which will result in a conviction.

A tiger with his talons tearing a crown was the device discovered on the arm of an Anarchist who is now in an Italian prison, whilst yet another bore the picture of what the police believe to be a bomb, but which looks more like a round soda-water syphon.

A grim, hideous and suggestive device is that which consists of a crowned cross-bones, and it may be taken for granted that the wearer is not the sort of person who would be allowed to mingle with the crowd when European monarchs go on one of their periodical tours.

Much milder is the sign which consists of a palette and a torch. We wonder whether the wearer means to suggest that he is an artist in crime.

The crossed dagger and torch is also a grimly suggestive design, and from the fact that the wearer set fire to a factory in Madrid. it may safely be said that it is for the good of the community that he is under lock and key.



The crowned emblem of death. A mysterious sign.

Emblems of labour enter very largely into the tattoo designs affected by these bloodthirsty ruffians, but for what reason it is difficult to imagine. No Anarchist worthy the

name has ever been guilty of working, except perhaps when he has been in gaol. Perhaps he adorns himself with pictures of tools in order that they may be a constant reminder to him of the irksomeness of labour.

1. Tiger and crown. 2. Boot and crowned serpent.

There are designs which consist of a couple of spades and a pick-axe crossed, another of an anvil. Yet another of a horseshoe, with a couple of hammers interlaced; one of a blacksmith, hammer in hand, engaged at an anvil; and still another of an axe, a shovel and a crowbar.

One of a brazier was worn by a now defunct Anarchist—the only good Anarchists are dead ones—whose acts of incendiarism terrorised a district in Austria some years ago and brought the criminal a long term of imprisonment.

Anarchists, when referring to royalty, are very fond of the "cut them down root and branch" argument, and doubtless this statement sank deeply into the mind of the man who had tattooed upon his arm a picture of an axe splitting a sturdy oak.

1. The brazier. 2. Sign of a maritime associate. 3. How a militant artist expresses his views. 4. Slow and sure—the tortoise.

The orator, too, is very fond of denouncing capital because it crushes labour, and one of the fraternity, doubtless flattering himself that he is a prophetic soul, has pictured labour crushing capital, the former being represented by a big boot and the latter by a writhing snake.

The sign of the ship is that borne by a sailor Anarchist, whilst that of a tortoise was the emblem of a man who, whilst he was still in the land of the living—his friends have an idea that he is in Siberia, which is the same thing—was famous for the plodding, methodical style in which he perfected his plots. "Slow and sure" was his motto. Doubtless if he really is in Siberia, he now regrets that his slowness prevented him from escaping from the myrmidons of the Great White Tsar.

"Captain Moonlight," who at one time terrorised certain districts in Ireland, and whose deeds will be recorded in these pages, adopted a gruesome device as his signature. It consisted of a picture of a coffin, on the lid of which was the hideous cross-bones. It was a signature which struck terror into many hearts.

The Moonlighters message of terror.

A mysterious sign is that of two circles intertwined and surmounted by a crown, and as this has been found upon the left arms of many Anarchists, it is supposed by the police to be the emblem of a secret society. Some of these signs have had letters attached, probably indicating that the wearer was an officer of the society.

After all said and done, it is very obliging of the Anarchists to earmark themselves in this way. One very notorious man, the principal in an outrage in Paris, would have escaped detection but for the fact that he was known to possess a tattoo mark just above the left wrist, and this was spotted quite accidentally by a vigilant detective who sat opposite the criminal in a 'bus. The Anarchist was reading, or pretending to read, a newspaper. Owing to the position of his hands his arms were exposed more than usual, and just below the tight wristband of his shirt appeared the tell-tale blue mark of the tattoo.

The officer who saw it quietly inspected the criminal, made sure that he was the man wanted, followed him when he got out of the 'bus, and, taking a favourable opportunity, sprang upon him and spread-eagled him, all the while whistling lustily for help. Partly stunned by the fall, and stretched out in a position in which it was almost impossible for him to struggle, the Anarchist soon found himself a prisoner, and, in due course, paid the penalty for his crimes.

Why Anarchists mark themselves by tattooing it is difficult to say. Once the design is pricked into the skin it is there "for keeps," as the Americans say, and can only be removed by cutting out the flesh. This operation, of course, leaves behind it an indelible scar, and so the Anarchist prefers the tattoo to undergoing the pain of its removal.

With the signs of Anarchists we close our account of the ways—mysterious and amazing—of criminals of every class.

THE END.

A Judge's Ruse.

LORD JUSTICE BARON POLLOCK was one of the cleverest imitators of handwriting, and would sometimes amuse himself by sending letters in other people's names and handwriting, so well imitated that the person whose handwriting was copied would swear to its being his own handwriting.

On one occasion he was trying a prisoner for forgery and embezzlement, and it appeared to him that the prosecutor was unusually prejudiced against the accused, and over-anxious to obtain a conviction.

There was a great doubt as to the guilt of the prisoner in the mind of the learned judge, and a certain document, written on an ordinary sheet of foolscap, was positively sworn to by the prosecutor as being in the prisoner's handwriting. The judge's own private opinion was that it was not, and he determined to test the knowledge of the prosecutor. It may be said that on this particular point, the handwriting of this document, the prisoner's guilt or innocence hinged.

Asking to look at the document, the judge rose from his seat, and went into his room, returning in about fifteen minutes with a large reading-glass in one hand and the document in the other.

He passed the latter to the jury, and asked them to examine it, which they did, and then handed it back to the judge. It was written in red ink.

Baron Pollock then handed it to the witness—the prosecutor—asked him to look at it again, which he did somewhat cursorily, and was about to pass it back to his lordship, when the latter said:

"Wait one moment. You have distinctly sworn that that document is in the handwriting of the prisoner?"

"Yes, my lord."

"But it is not like the prisoner's ordinary handwriting which I see in the books kept for you by the prisoner."

"No, my lord; but he has disguised his writing in this case, but not well enough to deceive me."

"Now, sir, look at that document again——"

Prosecutor, somewhat testily, interrupting his lordship:

"I have looked at it, and I say, on my oath, that the prisoner wrote it."

"Kindly wait till I have finished what I was going to say," continued his lordship. "Look at that document carefully again. Here, take this glass and examine it, and be very careful how you answer, for a man's liberty and character depend on the truth of your assertion. I ask you again, now that you have carefully examined it, is it in the prisoner's handwriting?"

"Yes, my lord."

"You will swear that, in spite of any evidence that may be adduced to the contrary?"

"Yes, my lord, I will positively swear it."

"Then," said the judge, "will you tell the jury whose writing this is?" taking another paper from his desk, and handing it to the witness. It was the original document which the prosecutor had sworn was in the prisoner's handwriting and the one the judge had first given him was a copy that Baron Pollock had executed when he retired to his room.

The witness was dumbfounded; he could not swear to either of them, and when the defending counsel, taking his cue from the judge, severely cross-examined him, he utterly broke down, and confessed that he did not believe that either of the documents was in prisoner's handwriting.

The accused was immediately discharged, and the prosecutor arrested for perjury and afterwards sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

Crimes of Dismemberment.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE MURDERS HIDDEN BY MUTILATION.

"When in your throat you feel the long, sharp knife,
And the blood trickles to the pudding pan;
And when at last, the death wound yawning wide,
Fainter and fainter grows the expiring cry,
Is there no grateful joy, no loyal pride
To think that for your master's good you die?"

—SOUTHEY "Ode to a Pig."

LOOKING over the long list of crimes with which we are acquainted, we are naturally struck by the fact that there are only four methods by which a murderer hopes to effect his safety and avoid having to pay the penalty of his misdeed. His identity may be known, and he may trust to flight and a change of name. His personality may be concealed and suspicion may be cast on an innocent person. The victim may die an apparently natural death, as in cases of poisoning, and the very existence of murder be unsuspected, or the victim may absolutely vanish, and there be no certain proof of his death. The first two modes are the commonest, for skilful poisoning requires an amount of knowledge not to be found in everybody, while the fourth means of concealing the criminal's guilt is both difficult, and in many cases very repulsive. It is with this last means of hiding the traces of crime that we purpose to deal here.

The disappearance of the victim is secured by his secret slaying and the disposal of his remains. The hidden murder is common to all cases, the disposal of the corpus delicti admits of variations which may roughly be divided into two great classes, namely interment in out of the way spots and dismemberment.

The method by which many of the old barons got rid of their private enemies might well be classed under the first of those heads, for history abounds with instances in which the hated one was immured in secret dungeons and allowed to starve to death, the cell being then bricked up, thus forming the tomb of the victim. So popular was this means of ridding oneself of an inconvenient rival that the law actually permitted it under the high-sounding title of "consigned to the oubliettes under a lettre de cachet." For the oubliettes in the Bastile and other mediæval prisons were nothing else than cells, which were destined to become the graves of their occupants. This means of committing murder without soiling the hands was naturally confined to the wealthy; the poor man had to kill his victim and then get rid of the body. Burial close to the scene of the tragedy has been popular ever since the time of the Flood, and has prospered right down to the present year, when the unknown murderer of the two gamekeepers, Kenyon and Uttley, attempted to inter the bodies of the two gamekeepers on Marsden Moor. The most notable example of this type of murder is perhaps the case of Troppmann, who buried his victims wholesale in the suburbs of Paris, and whose horrid history our readers will remember.

For the first case of dismemberment we have to go far back into the past. The Greeks related that Atreus, son of Pelops, and King of Mycenæ, murdered his nephew and had his remains converted into a savoury stew, with which he regaled the unfortunate lad's father! This, however, was more an act of vengeance than of pure murder, for, when the parent had made a good meal off the ragout, Atreus spoilt his digestion by telling him the recipe for the excellent dish.

To an Englishwoman belongs the doubtful honour of having been the first to use dismemberment in order to conceal murder. The awful crime of Catherine Hayes is still fresh in the memories of our regular readers, and even the most sentimental and humanitarian will agree that the fearful punishment which she suffered was not a whit too severe when the gravity of her offence was taken into account Catherine Hayes was slowly burnt to death.

Though this form of crime was invented in England, it is to France we have to go for the most notable instances of its perpetration. For nearly a hundred years French criminals fought shy of cutting up the bodies of their victims, but once the mode became fashionable it took the fancy of the Gallic murderer, and from the year 1825, when the first case of dismemberment took place in France, right up to the present day, the annals of crime are thickly strewn with accounts of murders so repulsive that only the least obnoxious can be published.

In 1825 Charles Dautun, a lieutenant in the 4th Regiment of Infantry, killed his aunt and his brother and chopped them up. His crime was unnecessary, even from a murderer's point of view, and to this day no adequate motive can be discovered for it. On March the 28th, 1825, he paid the penalty of the guillotine.

Regey, an old soldier, who had been decorated in the battlefield for bravery, was the next criminal to make use of dismemberment. He killed a comrade named Ramus, in August, 1832, and, cutting him into convenient-sized joints, threw the pieces into the Seine. The murder was committed with prussic acid. The limbs were recovered from the water, pieced together, and eventually the criminal was run to earth. In March, 1833, Regey was carried, fighting, screaming, and mad with terror, to the guillotine, and beheaded.

The outcry in England in 1835 over the ghastly murder of Hannah Brown by the monster Greenacre, who dismembered her body, obscured the sensation caused on the Continent by the wickedness of Lhuissier, a French tradesman, who, though unknown to Greenacre, imitated him in a surprising manner, and for exactly identical reasons. Lhuissier, by the way, rather improved on Greenacre by nailing a portion of the body of his victim to the inside of the door of a sideboard!

The exploits of Viou, who murdered M. Poirier-Desfontaines and cut him up, have been already recounted in these pages. He suffered in 1851. Fifteen years later we find France ringing with the horrors of the Avinain murders, which we will describe in detail in another place. Suffice it to say that the murderer was accountable for the deaths of a great number of persons, all of whom he chopped up and threw into the Seine. The theft of hay seems to have been his sole motive. Between the date of Viou's execution and that of Avenain there was another paltry case of dismemberment, namely the crime of Dombey, who was a poor imitator of Viou. He was guillotined in 1854.

Avinain was followed by Vignat, in 1870, a farmer who killed his wife, cut her up into little pieces, and mixed her remains with stable manure, which he used to fertilise ten acres of land. He was not caught for a couple of years, about the same time as Sitbon and Toledano were captured in London for the slaughter of a Marseilles merchant, and Vaux, a Geneva murderer, was taken into custody. These three men were mere imitators and lacked originality.

Billoir, an old soldier, caused a certain amount of sensation in 1876 by his disposal of the body of his mistress, Marie le Manach, in Paris.

Then we have the Wainwright horror, which agitated England, and which would never have been discovered but for a lucky accident, and he is followed by Kate Webster.

Michel Eyraud and Gabrielle Bompard distinguished themselves in recent years by their brutal murder of M. Gouffé; Maestdag, of Antwerp, killed his wife, cut her up into tiny fragments and boiled her down for soup. Vitalis we have mentioned in these pages, Menesclou and Mielle are too awful for even mention, and so the list stretches right down to Edgar Edwards, who died on the gallows in 1903 for the last murder accompanied by mutilation.

Terrible as the list is, it is to be feared that there are many instances in which the work of the murderer is too well done, and the victim is never heard of again. It is all very well to say that the police know who perpetrated certain crimes, what the public wants is for the evil-doers to be brought to justice.

Terrible Tale of the Sea. ..

THE MUTINY ON THE "LENNIE" AND THE RETRIBUTION ON THE GALLOWS

"All stood together on the deck
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the moon did glitter."
—COLERIDGE, "The Ancient Mariner."

TOWARDS the end of October, 1875, the three-masted sailing ship "Lennie," of Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, of some 900 tons, was lying at Antwerp awaiting a crew.

The captain was a French-Canadian, named Stanley Hatfield; the chief mate, one Joseph Wortley; the second mate, Richard Macdonald, both Englishmen; and the chief steward, a Belgian, named Constant von Hoydouch. The "Lennie" was a British ship sailing under the English flag. As was not unusual then, and is even more the case now, her crew of sixteen hands all told were for the greater part foreigners. Some of these, to the number of eleven, had been picked up in London by the ship's agent, brought to Antwerp, and there signed articles in the presence of the British Consul.

"They are all foreigners, and very little English they understand. I would sooner have a boatswain on board that could talk to them," said the captain, viewing the motley, ill-assorted crowd that was to compose his crew. "Can any of you men speak English?"

A gesture, a nod, and it was evident they did not; but from the ranks there stepped Geo. Green, who, because he could speak English, Greek, Italian, and Austrian, was promoted to the rank of boatswain, with its full rate of pay if he proved efficient in his duties, the interpreting of orders being not an unimportant part. Four of the crew in particular attracted attention. They were Greeks; their names, Malteo Cargalis, Giovanni Cacaris, Pascales Caludis, and Geo. Kaida. Familiarly they were known as follows: Cargalis was nicknamed "French Peter"; Cacaris, "Joe the Cook"; Caludis, on account of his stature, "Big Harry"; and Kaida, "Lips," from the fact that his were unusually large, prominent, and ugly.

Having introduced the chief characters in the terrible story of the sea we are about to relate, we will turn our thoughts to the scene of the sanguinary drama—the deck of the "Lennie." The crew worked hard to prepare her for her voyage to New Orleans and Savannah, and, in bright and beautiful weather, she in due course sailed away.

Everything went smoothly enough apparently. There was no outward sign of disagreement among the men, and perfect concord and amity reigned, to all appearances, between the crew and its officers. But in the quietness of the forecastle, in between the watches, when welcome leisure took the place of harassing work, these foreigners hatched and plotted for the destruction of their captain. He accompanied his orders, perhaps not unnecessarily, with a great many forcible oaths, and sometimes, if his directions were not followed quickly enough, thought nothing of teaching the laggard a lesson by violence. This sort of conduct on the part of Captain Hatfield cut deeply the crawling, easy-going foreigners, and, indeed, in six days from the time the "Lennie" had slipped her moorings at Antwerp they had plotted a terrible revenge, and, what was more, were only waiting for the slightest provocation to put their blood-thirsty scheme immediately into action.

The opportunity came quickly enough. It was early on the morning of October 31, 1875, that Captain Hatfield found it necessary to drive his crew with strong words and hot temper. His loud voice rang out:

"'Bout ship! Main top sail! Haul away the main braces! D—— it, you are no men! You are a lot of soldiers! You're no sailors, you ——, you ——"

These phrases, shouted vociferously and harshly, perhaps fitting the case, led to an awful scene. "Big Harry" took the lead.

"Now then, you ——!" again cried Captain Hatfield; but his order was cut short by "Big Harry," who, unsheathing a formidable knife, jumped towards the captain, and plunged it with considerable force into his stomach. The captain, then standing by the side of the poop, backed away from his assailant, and in doing so almost walked completely round the poop. "Big Harry," threatening and relentless, followed with his knife, the blood quickly dripping from its point in small spots upon the deck, marking the course. When the captain had struggled almost round the poop, "French Peter" held him up with an upraised knife. Captain Hatfield, besieged both back and front by ferocious men with fearful weapons, hesitated a moment, and stood, pale and imploring, with a pained, mute expression, his life's blood fast flowing down his clothing and on to the deck.

"French Peter" brought his upraised right hand, the knife tightly clenched in it, down upon Captain Hatfield's forehead, and a spurt of crimson showed only too plainly that his aim was true. "French Peter" was blood-thirsty once more, and hid his knife in the captain's side. "Big Harry" then caught hold of the captain round the waist, lifted him up bodily, and heaved him violently on to the deck.

Events had moved quickly, and it was only at this moment that the second mate, Richard Macdonald, who had been standing on the bridge, was able to do anything. He dashed down on to the deck and faced the murderous mob (for many of the other members of the crew, owing to fright and fear, readily joined the stronger side), and ran to the captain's assistance. He tried to raise the fast-dying man with the intention of carrying him into his cabin. "Big Harry" effectually prevented him by brutally stabbing him twice. The second mate moved quickly forward, and, lowering his head, put his hands on the boatswain's shoulders for support and protection. "Boatswain, save my life!" he cried piteously. But the boatswain, seeing the angry crew facing him with deadly implements, was afraid of the same fate. "How can I? It's impossible! If I do that they will kill me!" he answered.

The boatswain pushed him on one side, in order to preserve his own life. "Big Harry," frantic now, seized the second mate, and deliberately thrust his knife into that officer's neck, once, twice, thrice, until he fell, almost dead, at his assailant's feet.

The chief mate, seeing the overwhelming odds he had to face, tried to escape up the fore rigging. "Joe the Cook" had produced a double-barrelled horse-pistol, and, offering it to "Lips," directed him to pursue the chief mate and kill him. "Lips" was reluctant to do so. "Joe the Cook" forced him. Up the rigging "Lips" climbed until he was near enough to the chief mate to carry out his fell purpose.

"Mind how you shoot!" cried "Joe the Cook," "for one of the barrels is broken, and we don't want you to hit one of us."

"All right!" responded "Lips," as he pointed the heavy weapon at the chief mate. Four shots in quick succession were fired; two found resting-places in the chief mate's body. "Lips," having accomplished this, rejoined the noisy, clamouring, approving crew. Hand under hand the chief mate lowered himself by the main buttling on to the deck. "Joe the Cook" was not content. He ran behind the first mate, and plunged his knife, which was a foot or more in length, right through his body. Then he playfully "kept putting it in and drawing it out several times all over his body everywhere." The chief mate fell heavily to the deck, whereupon "French Peter" went forward, stood on his almost dead body, and hacked away at his neck with a knife until he had nearly severed the head from the trunk.

Up to now three murders had been committed in less time than it takes to record the facts. The scuffling of feet, the language, both violent and vehement, of the crew, the sound of pistol shots, awakened the only other officer left alive.

This was Constant von Hoydouch, the Belgian chief steward, and he was lying in his berth in his cabin in the after part of the vessel, where all the "Lennie's" officers' quarters were.

"Harry, are you awake?" shouted the chief steward; and from the next bunk beneath came the reply of Henry

Troussilot, a youth acting as second steward, whose very first experience of life at sea it was.

"Yes!" he called back.

"Well, get up and see what time it is!"

Harry disappeared to look at the clock in the cabin.

"It's 4.25," he said upon his return.

"That's curious!" added the chief steward. "They haven't come to call us this morning. We'd better turn out."

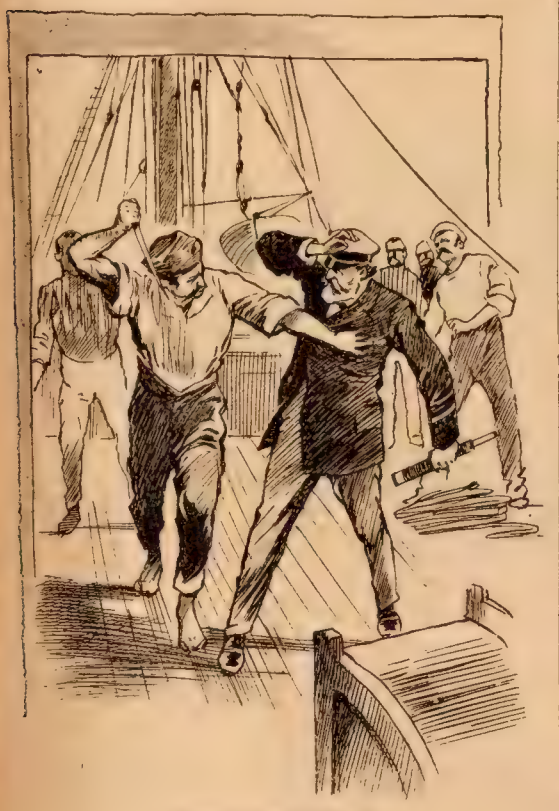
It certainly was curious, for the change of watches usually took place at four o'clock.

"Harry," went on the chief steward, "you'd better make the coffee ready."

For this purpose Troussilot mounted the companion to reach the deck. Both the doors at the top—the one from the starboard and the other from the port side—were fastened together. He tried to open them, whereupon from the outside two rough voices demanded to know who was there.

"It's the captain," said Troussilot with trepidation.

"It cannot be the captain!" shouted back the men guarding the door outside—"Big Harry" and "Lips"—for they knew they had murdered him.



Plunged it into his Stomach.

"Well, then, it's the steward," said Troussilot.

"What do you want?"

"To go to the galley and make the coffee."

"There's plenty of time between this and eight o'clock (this was the usual breakfast-time). You stop down below."

Troussilot reported the condition of affairs to the chief steward. Von Hoydouch mounted the companion-ladder and tried to force the doors open. With much trouble he succeeded in opening them a little, not more than two inches. Peering through, he saw that they were held by ropes, whilst "Lips" and "Big Harry" stood by watching, in order to prevent him breaking through. The questions put to Troussilot were repeated, and the same injunction: "You stop down below!" angrily given by "Big Harry."

In the meantime, the murderous crew had made fast to the captain's body the pump used for washing down the deck, some heavy chain was wound round that of the chief officer, and some iron ring-bolts were secured to the corpse of the second mate. All were in turn heaved into the sea and sank out of sight.

Whilst all these gruesome details were being carried out, Von Hoydouch looked in the chief and second mates' rooms, and also the captain's, where, under the pillow, he found two revolvers, one loaded with six shots and the other with four. He put them in his pockets, for use if necessary. After that he stood on the table in the aft cabin, and, lifting the skylight, first peered through and afterwards tried to clamber out on to the deck.

The man at the wheel observed the steward's move.

"Come aft, boys!" he called out; "the steward is coming through the skylight."

The rapid, hurry-scurry sound of many feet coming aft caused Von Hoydouch to shut the skylight with a bang, and retreat quickly into the interior of another cabin.

The steward was haunted with all sorts of ideas. He expected momentarily that the crew would descend and murder him. Then he thought that perhaps they might let him live if he surrendered himself to them unarmed.

So he withdrew the two revolvers from his pocket, and concealed them in his locker. Another moment, and he thought better of that, and promptly regained possession of the loaded weapons, determined to "chance it," to fight to the bitter end to save his own life.

At about 5.50 a.m. the boatswain led the way into the cabin in which he was. "French Peter," "Big Harry," and all the crew, except one man left in charge of the wheel, trooped in behind. The crew pounced on to the steward, seized him, and "rubbed him down," but the search was so hurriedly done that the revolvers went undiscovered—a fortunate oversight which saved Von Hoydouch from immediate death.

The boatswain was the first to speak. "Well, steward," he said, "we have finished now."

"What the hell have you finished?" exclaimed Von Hoydouch.

"We have finished the captain, the mate, and the second," came the cool but startling response. "Can you navigate, steward?"

"I understand a little," said Von Hoydouch.

"We've made up our minds to go to Greece," said one of the crew. "If you like to save your own life you had better take charge of the ship and bring us there, or to Gibraltar, and we will find Greece. You bring us there. You will be all right, steward. We will take the boats when we get there, and put the sails and everything into them, and sell them ashore and divide the money between us. You will have your share, the same as anybody else. The charts, the sextants, and all that belongs to the navigator you can have. Me and my cousin have got a rich uncle. He'll buy everything. We will scuttle the ship. My uncle is a large owner there of some ships. We will see you all right, steward, and will get you made master of one of those vessels."

Von Hoydouch pretended to fall in with their plans, in order to see that justice would gain her ends.

"Well, men," he said in assumed cheerful tones, "go on deck and get the main braces ready. I hope you will all agree and also obey my orders."

The crew replied in a noisy chorus, "All right, steward!"

"Where are the bodies of the captain and the others?" asked Von Hoydouch.

"Oh, they're all right; they're overboard."

And so Von Hoydouch, steward of the "Lennie," became her captain, popularly promoted by a murderous band because none of them were capable of navigating the vessel whose commander and chief officers they had ruthlessly slaughtered.

"Captain" von Hoydouch worked hard and long from the moment he and the crew assembled on the deck. He was sickened by the silent, eloquent reminders of the atrocious murders, the deck with its pools of blood, the sails and the rigging with its crimson spots, the evil, insatiable-looking faces of his crew, and over all the heavy, gloomy clouds around the violent sea, lashing and raging in its fury as though to show its displeasure at the awful tragedies.

But Von Hoydouch, bitter as the sea was, angry as the boisterous weather seemed to be, and villainous as the crew were, thought little of his surroundings. His duty was to see to the safety of his ship, and, more important still, to watch over the murderers until such time as justice overtook them, and the law exacted its last dread penalty for their infamous misdeeds.

And how he courageously carried out what was required we will proceed to relate.

Von Hoydouch worked the ship, got it braced up, squared and put the sails necessary for her progression, the sheet and tacks and everything in order, and headed the "Lennie" for the Bristol Channel. They were then some 180 miles from Falmouth, and, raising the hopes of his

criminal cargo with repeated assurances that they would soon reach Greece, he gave them the course, and told them how to steer—for the Bristol Channel.

The deck, with its blood-stained traces of the crimes, was washed down again and again, until they remained no longer, and then "Lips," "Joe the Cook," "Big Harry," and "French Peter," the most prominent mutineers, calmly sat down with the others, and heartily enjoyed their coffee and food at the breakfast-table.

On each side of the starboard and port quarters, and also forward on each side of the bow, a long piece of wood bore, in gilt letters, the words, "Lennie, of Yarmouth, Nova Scotia." These were cut and broken away, splintered, and cast into the tempestuous sea. Some paint was mixed up, and the name, etc., obliterated at the stern of the vessel, all with the idea of destroying its identification from passing ships. After that some of the crew went in search of anything valuable stored in the captain's, the mate's, and the second mate's cabins. They greedily seized their belongings and carried them forward to the forecastle, for after-examination and selection. "French Peter," "Big Harry," and "Lips" were mostly concerned in this raid on the dead men's property. "Big Harry," as if it were his due for his share in the blood-curdling exploit, donned the captain's clothes, wore them about the ship, and occupied the captain's berth and bed.

And, day after day, the vessel proceeded under "Captain" von Hoydouch's directions, hour by hour getting nearer the port of justice. But the participators in the mutiny were mistrustful, and studied closely, frequently, and for long periods the charts kept in the murdered captain's cabin.

One day the murderers' doubts found vent in the loud-voiced accusation of one of them:

"Steward, you are not going for Greece. You are going for some part of the Channel. I can see it on the water!"

Von Hoydouch was equally emphatic in his remonstrance.

"You mind your own business. I am master now. I am in charge of the ship, and I won't be ordered by you. If you don't keep quiet and civil I will blow your brains out, and that quick! You understand?"

This speech was quickly carried forward to the men in the forecastle, and discussed eagerly.

"The steward is going to sell us. He is not going to Greece. He is going to the Channel," said another. All hands, fired with this statement, approached "Captain" von Hoydouch in a body.

"Where are you going, steward?" demanded "Big Harry" in loud tones.

"To Greece, of course!" shouted Von Hoydouch, "and if they leave me alone and do not worry I'll get them there all right."

Appeased by the response, the men returned to their work. Von Hoydouch thought it advisable to alter his course for the French coast. He shifted the "Lennie" in the direction of Brest. At about 8.30 on the night of the 4th November they were nearing the Isle de Ré. It was a very misty evening; the weather was fearful, the sea rolling and lashing viciously, the wind very boisterous.

AT THE POINT OF THE REVOLVER.

As the "Lennie" neared the island of Salos de Leon some lights from the shore were dimly visible through the hazy night. The mutineers' fears of betrayal at once came uppermost in their minds. Once more they approached "Captain" von Hoydouch. "Big Harry" was again the spokesman.

"Steward, what are you doing in here? You see there is land all round. Look at the lights here!"

"Never you mind," replied the steward; "I know where I am. I think it is better for us to anchor here and lie here till we get a fair wind."

The men, who had, owing to the terrible weather, to work extraordinarily hard, were sceptical.

"What is the good of you all pulling and hauling and killing yourselves night and day?" continued Von Hoydouch; "we are making no headway because the wind is bad. We may just as well have a night's rest and come to anchor."

"No, we will make no anchor. We don't want that.

We will lay the ship to and shorten her sails," said "French Peter."

"All right; anything pleases me," said Von Hoydouch off-handedly.

The sails were shortened, and the ship allowed to drift.

That night Von Hoydouch gave the boy Troussilot a message to be copied in French and English, stating the position of affairs. Half-a-dozen bottles were all that could be found empty. Into these the messages were placed; they were corked and dropped into the sea.

"Joe the Cook" kept watch with Von Hoydouch. As they paced to and fro on the deck the former said, "Steward, don't you be afraid. They won't kill you. They won't do anything so long as you see us right to Greece. We have done enough. We have killed three. We don't want to do any more, but I am afraid they will kill the boy (Troussilot) because they are afraid when he goes ashore at Greece, or anywhere else, he will split upon them and tell the tale."

"I'll look out for that," ventured Von Hoydouch; "he won't say anything. It is only his first voyage at sea. Leave him alone. If you do anything to the boy it will only be life for life. My life is just as sweet as the boy's, and I will take the boy's part."

"French Peter," who had overheard this conversation, chimed in, "All right, steward, we can trust to you. You promise that he won't say anything when he does get ashore. You will look out that everything will be all right, won't you, steward?"

"Yes, if you leave the boy alone."

Early the next morning the boatswain found "Captain" Von Hoydouch in his cabin. "I have orders to tell you to take the ship out to sea again and to leave the port as soon as possible," said he, delivering the message of the mutineers.

"All right!" acquiesced the steward; "but why don't you let us lie here? There's a head wind."

"No," said the boatswain; "you want to sell all my countrymen."

"You are only an officer in this vessel," said Von Hoydouch, "and you are bound to take my part before anyone else's. But then, you are no friend of mine."

Von Hoydouch went on deck and took the "Lennie" out to sea again. Five miles from land, when he was standing on the poop, "French Peter" walked up to him. "I shall have to do the same with you as we have done with the others. You will sell us all."

"If you think so you had better take charge yourself. I won't do any more," said Von Hoydouch.

Thereupon he relinquished his "command" and another member of the crew acted as "captain" until the next day. In the evening "Big Harry" begged Von Hoydouch to act again in that capacity. The steward was obdurate, to show his apparent indifference and disinterestedness.

Later, however, a deputation from the crew went to him.

"Steward, you must take charge of the ship. That fellow can't navigate."

"Well," answered Hoydouch, "I will, on one consideration: that you will leave me alone and let me have my way. Then I'll see you right. When I see that the weather is better than it is now, I'll go into port and lay anchor, and when there comes a fair wind I'll take the ship to Gibraltar."

"Big Harry" agreed, and threatened to lop off the ears of the first man who interfered with the steward.

The wind was blowing wildly from the westward when Von Hoydouch put the "Lennie" back for the Isle de Ré. On the evening of the 7th November, they sighted land, got into the bay once more, shortened sail, and lay at anchor.

"What place is this?" queried "Big Harry," not recognising the Isle de Ré.

"Oh," said Von Hoydouch, "it's near Cadiz, and when we get our wind we shall soon be in Gibraltar."

"We must wait till night time before we land," continued "Big Harry." "It will never do to pass Gibraltar in the daytime. We must wait and get through at night."

When Von Hoydouch let the anchor go, he gave it a run of five fathoms of chain, so as to make it exceedingly difficult to get up again. He made the sails fast, and ordered all hands below. He himself stayed on the anchor watch, and, whilst so engaged, got ready two dozen more of the messages, which were thrown overboard in the middle of the night.

At five o'clock on the morning of the 8th November, Von Hoydouch hoisted a flag signal, "Ship in distress." It remained for three hours, when "French Peter" inquired what it was for. Von Hoydouch explained that it was to tell them ashore that they were only waiting for a fair wind.

"Never mind," said "French Peter," "I must have it down," and walking to the poop he hauled it down.

Other members of the crew had been searching for the flag book to see what the signal really meant. Von Hoydouch had discreetly foiled them by concealing it. He had also secretly prepared a huge light to show a distress signal if danger threatened him. It was a large bath filled up with kerosene oil, and containing old candles, etc., and would have burnt brilliantly for a long time.

"Lips" went about getting paraffin with which to unshackle the anchor chain, so that they could let the end through and so proceed without it. "Lips" made a strong torch-light, which he used to burn the rust off the chain, so as to be ready to slip it at any moment.

A French pilot came out to have a look at the "Lennie," and inquire why she stopped there. "French Peter" ordered Von Hoydouch below. "I shall act as captain now," he said. "I can speak French enough." The pilot, after much difficulty, got within speaking distance.

Looking through some small holes in the aft cabin, Von Hoydouch could see and hear what took place. "French Peter" plausibly explained that the chronometer was run down, and that they were waiting for a fair wind. The pilot returned satisfied.

"Big Harry" appeared anxious to get ashore. "What sort of land is this, steward?" he asked.

"It's a Republic. There are no police, and the best thing you can do is to go ashore. I will stay aboard here for a fortnight, so that I cannot report anything until you are far, far away."

The ruse worked, and Von Hoydouch successfully divided the forces of his opponent, for six, including "French Peter," "Joe the Cook," "Big Harry," and "Lips," lowered a boat the next morning. They put in the dead men's property, took aboard provisions, and sailed away.

The morning following Von Hoydouch again hoisted the signal, "Ship in distress." A French gunboat came out in answer. Seeing it on its way, Von Hoydouch, at the point of his revolvers, compelled the five remaining members of the crew to lower a boat and get into it.

Then the story was told for the first time, and the men taken prisoners. Some days later the other men were captured, and, eight in all, were committed, after extradition proceedings, to the Old Bailey for trial. Four were acquitted, but "French Peter," "Joe the Cook," "Big Harry," and "Lips" were convicted, and sentenced to death by Mr. Justice Brett. The witness, Von Hoydouch, received the commendation of the court, and an award of £50, for his courageous conduct.

On Tuesday, March 23rd, 1876, at a little before eight o'clock in the morning, Marwood, the executioner, and his assistants entered the condemned cell of the four felons, and the process of pinioning followed. All admitted they deserved the fate they were to undergo. A sort of procession was formed. Each of the prisoners walked between two warders, and there were others on the look out for violence, whilst ready in the yard were members of the city police force. "French Peter" was the first led out. He walked with a firm, quick step, and showed no signs of fear. "Joe the Cook" came next, then "Big Harry," and, finally, "Lips." After the murderers had been placed under the beam of the scaffold, and the ropes had been adjusted around their bare necks, "Big Harry" smiled, and, nodding at those who were in front of him, exclaimed, "Good-bye, good-bye."

Facing the row of wretched criminals stood the black-robed Archimandrite, wearing the peculiar clerical hat which denoted his rank and sacred function. Having his back to the scaffold, he could only be judged of his firmness and control by the voice in which he read the service of the Greek Church, and from such indications it appeared that he was rather overcome by his painful duty.

The aspect of the culprits, even for the brief time they were standing beneath the beam, was enough to shake the nerves of the most experienced gaol chaplain. Of the four prisoners, "French Peter" seemed the most penitent, and anxious to profit by the spiritual aid and consolation, but the two next to him, "Big Harry" and "Lips," also spared some moments from their boastful bravery to murmur a prayer.

As for "Joe the Cook," his abject fear and utter prostration prevented his understanding or even hearing the sacred words. All the prisoners wore that strange head-dress—a loosely-fitting white cap, which covered their heads but left their faces exposed. When the end came, the mouths of three of the men were seen moving as the bolt was shot, and their figures dropped like plummets into the pit. "Joe the Cook" fainted a moment or two before, and seemed dead as he fell.

So fittingly ended the careers of the "Lennie" mutineers.

THE Fordingbridge Murder

How a brute in human guise named George J. Gilbert waylaid a young woman on her way to worship and murdered her to gratify a moment's passion.

"Began to bend down his admiring eyes
On all her touching looks and qualities,
Turning their shapely sweetness every way,
Till 'twas his food and habit all the day."
—LEIGH HUNT.

FORDINGBRIDGE is a small rustic hamlet not very far from the town of Winchester. It is a typical Hampshire village, and forty years ago was a remote and sufficiently-secluded spot. At this place, in the year 1862, was perpetrated a brutal murder—committed with every circumstance of atrocity—which is remembered with horror in the district to this very day. Sometimes a crime is recorded in which it is possible to find one palliating circumstance, one redeeming feature. In the story we are about to relate there is nothing which can by any stretch of the imagination be urged in mitigation of the murderer or in extenuation of his crime. He stands out as one of the greatest brutes in the criminal annals of our time. He committed the deed with a light heart and a gay smile. He had planned the outrage beforehand, watching his victim day by day, fanning the criminal lust he entertained towards her with each new glimpse of her, and finally consummating the dreadful act with a wanton savagery, with a remorseless fury worthy of the wildest beast, but incredible of a human being. He was a monster with none of the milk of human kindness—he was the cowardly debaucher and slayer of a young, bright, and innocent girl, who but for him might have lived, have loved, have married and been happy; and when he paid the just penalty of his crime, the world was well rid of so merciless a ruffian. His execution did not occasion one sigh or pang of regret from one right-thinking man or woman. Not a single voice was raised to stay the hand of justice, and he seems to have inspired a universal horror. Such was George J. Gilbert, a murderer whose enormity has seldom been equalled and has never been surpassed.

The case of this man affords a striking illustration of what we may describe as the growth of crime. The greater portion of Gilbert's iniquitous career was spent in prison, and he ran the whole gamut of lighter crime before he made himself for ever infamous as a cruel murderer. Like the murderer of the Darby family at Camberwell—the late but unlamented Edgar Edwards—theft and other offences were stepping-stones with Gilbert on the downward path, and were merely the preliminaries to his last great crime. He was by nature, by instinct, and by habit, a confirmed criminal. Such men go from bad to worse—they are the enemies of all law and order, the pests of our social system. Their natures are made worse by imprisonment. They suffer for their crimes, endure their varying sentences, and are then let loose upon society, ready, nay eager, for the opportunity to avenge themselves upon the better-ordered classes. They are at once a menace and a danger to the human race, and the confirmed criminal should no more be allowed abroad—free and unfettered—than a savage tiger or a homicidal maniac. George Gilbert was inured to the punishment of prisons, and cared little or nothing for the consequences of what he did. If he desired anything particularly, he stole it. If he wished to gratify a licentious passion, he did not stop at murder in encompassing it. With no idea of heaven or hell, with no scruples of conscience, with no fear of death or dread of the hereafter, he was of the true type of which murderers are made. And now for his story.

George J. Gilbert was the son of respectable parents, and had received a fair amount of education; but he had been a wastrel and a ne'er-do-weel from his earliest years. He had only sought his companions amongst the vicious and depraved, and had been a fruitful source of trouble and anxiety to all who knew him, and who vainly looked for better things from him as he grew to man's estate.

He was a strong, stoutly-built fellow of something over thirty-five years of age when our story opens, and he possessed a particularly brutal and repulsive type of countenance, exhibiting in his features and expression a warning which those who ran might read. A prey to the most confirmed sensuality, it has been hinted that there were many victims to his unbridled lust before poor Mary Anne Hall caught his eyes and riveted his attention.

Suffice it to say that he was an habitual criminal, and had repeatedly been convicted of offences of greater or less magnitude. He had thrice been tried and convicted for felony. On one conviction he had been sentenced to seven years' transportation, but had been released with a ticket-of-leave at the expiration of three and a half years. On a subsequent conviction he was sentenced to four years' penal servitude, and on this occasion duly suffered the full term. He was now at large, a free man, and a terror and shame to the entire community.

He was not a Hampshire man by birth, but it appears that in the rare intervals when he consented to do any regular work, Gilbert had found some employment with the various farmers in the district of Fordingbridge, and on his release from prison he had wandered back to his old haunts, and in the month of June, 1862, was working as a farm labourer at so much a day. He was given to loitering about the fields and lanes, and often frightened the young girls and children as they passed him, on the way home or to school, by his rough demeanour and sinister expression.

Mary Anne Susan Hall was the daughter of a small farmer whose land was in the vicinity of Fordingbridge. She was a young woman of excellent character, a pretty, blooming country girl, known to all in the district, and disliked and distrusted by none. She was only nineteen when this tragic tale commences, but she had many suitors because of her virtues and good looks. To all, however, she turned a deaf ear. Her head could not be turned by flattery and admiration, coarsely expressed, as no doubt they were by a lot of rustics. She was well-brought-up and well-educated, and for the present she was content to remain in maiden meditation, fancy free. Still, she was a jolly girl, with a laugh for a joke and a pleasant smile for everyone, save, perhaps, for that dark and evil visage, whose malignant eye she had caught watching her curiously on many occasions throughout that spring. He had encountered her suddenly on her way to the little general shop in the pretty street of the village, had met her on the fine Sunday evenings as she returned from church, or had hung about her father's farmstead to catch a passing glimpse of her as she went about the duties of the home. Yes, Mary Anne Hall had got to notice him, and to feel disturbed—she knew not why—when she met his ardent gaze, and George Jacob Gilbert had got from merely looking to smiling or nodding as his bold eyes encountered hers and hers drooped down. She felt an intense aversion to this man—a positive fear and loathing of him not difficult to comprehend when we know the dreadful sequel; but he was never rough or rude or threatening when they met, and she did not feel it necessary, at least as yet, to mention the annoyance to her friends. As for Gilbert, a frightful plan was already forming in his ill-balanced mind, a fearful thought consumed him, and he waited opportunity to put his fell purpose into execution. He felt a desire for the girl, and he had resolved to stop at nothing in its gratification. He let his thoughts run riot on the subject of her charms, and did not conceal his admiration for the girl from his familiars, expressing it in terms which, coarse and brutal as they were, cannot be reproduced here. One Sunday in May, Gilbert was standing in a field with a companion, idly cutting a stick with his great knife, and, looking up, he observed Miss Hall in the narrow road which led to the village church. He relinquished his task and gazed after her.

"What are you looking at?" asked his companion carelessly.

"A pretty girl," said Gilbert, adding, with an oath, that he "meant to have her some of these fine days." He expressed in more explicit terms a licentious desire towards the girl, and had used a coarse expression to the effect that he should have no hesitation in committing a criminal offence upon her if he had a chance. The man to whom these delicate remarks were addressed thought little of them at the time—Gilbert was always foul-mouthed—but a week or two later he learnt that the scoundrel had been in earnest, and he was able to testify to the words used at the latter's trial.

On the morning of Sunday, the 22nd of June, 1862, Mary Hall left her father's house about ten o'clock for the purpose of going to Fordingbridge Church, which was at a distance of about one mile from Midgham Farm, by a public footpath leading from Midgham Moor. A stile at the end of the moor

led to a lane called Holme's Lane, having a high hedge and a bank on each side. On one side of the lane was a field called Harding's, and in this field were two cows. It had been raining heavily overnight, and the lanes and the fields were in a very wet and muddy condition. The poor girl left home with a bright farewell to the father who was never to see her in life again. It was a fine sunshiny day, and the girl felt happy, and at peace with all the world. Her young life had been good and virtuous, and she had not a single care. The cloudless sky was above her, the green grass beneath her feet, flowers bloomed, trees blossomed, birds sang—and her murderer waited for her in Holme's Lane!

The girl, when she left her home, was dressed in a dark skirt, plainly trimmed, a mantle with tassels, and a bonnet with green flowers. She carried a parasol, and in her pocket were a small prayer and hymn book. She did not return to her father's at the usual time, but her absence caused no alarm, because it was presumed that she had gone, as she occasionally did after church, to spend an hour at her cousin's, a girl of about her own age.

George Gilbert lodged with a Mrs. Philpotts, who had married a half-brother of his. At about half-past three in the afternoon of this Sunday, this person went out for a walk with her little boy, and she had not proceeded far when she met Gilbert, lounging along as usual, coming in the direction of her house. Mrs. Philpotts observed that he was carelessly swinging a lady's parasol in his right hand, and she asked at once, "George, wherever did you get that parasol?" He at once replied, "Oh, I found it in Harding's field. It was blowing about in the field, and the cows were startled at it, and making a great to do, so I picked it up and fetched it away." He then asked, still carelessly playing with the parasol, if her husband was at home, and she replied in the affirmative, and asked what he wanted with him. Gilbert hesitated a little, gazing about him and shuffling his feet before he replied. Then he said, "Here's a nice set out. I have found a woman dead in the ditch, smothered with mud."

Mrs. Philpotts was greatly alarmed, and especially so at the cool way in which he made this announcement. She requested him, if his tale was true, to go on and alarm the village, but this he seemed rather reluctant to do, and at last the woman herself went back to her house and informed her husband. The latter at once informed a policeman, and a party set out about four o'clock to examine the lane and the fields. It does not appear that Gilbert made any effort to escape during this search, for he was found later lounging at a corner with some companions in the village street. The party searching the lane found evidence soon enough that a fearful crime had been committed. There were all the signs of a desperate and long-continued struggle. The grass and the nettles were all trodden down, and the water in the lane was disturbed and muddy. At one part the bushes were broken, and here, in a ditch, covered over with bushes and leaves, they found the unfortunate young woman, quite dead. Her clothes were disturbed, the eyes were bloodshot, the tongue protruding, the lips swollen, and there were marks of violent compression round the throat. It seemed at first as though death had been brought about by strangulation, but on further examination it was shown that, in his furious struggle with his victim, the ruffian must have forced her face into the muddy water, and that the immediate cause of death was suffocation. At the same time, the villain had made a desperate endeavour to strangle the poor girl, and only her death by the suffocating action of the water prevented the accomplishment of his first design. Death had, too, anticipated the licentious purpose of the murderer, for she had not been violated, and it was clear that she had made a tremendous struggle to preserve her virtue. Poor girl! The discoverers of this crime were appalled at the spectacle. All had known and esteemed the victim, and not one but felt her tragic death a personal loss. The utmost eagerness was evinced on all hands to discover the dastardly perpetrator, and threats of summary vengeance if he should be caught before the police could interfere were heard on all sides. The body was reverently lifted and carried to the village, while the vicar of the parish—who had been informed of the event, and to whom the girl had been well known—went to break the news to the unhappy father. The latter was half beside himself with grief and horror.

In the meanwhile, George Gilbert stood idling in the principal street, discussing the crime in all its bearings, and making ribald allusions to the deceased and the manner of her death. But suspicion was already strongly directed against him. He was the dog with the bad name, and the only person in the whole community whose antecedents rendered it not improbable that he could be guilty of such a devil's act as this. His remarks on a previous Sunday in reference to the girl were recalled and brought against him by the man to whom they were addressed. On the morning of the murder he had been seen near the spot where the deed was done, and he had hung about the fields and lanes all day. It was observed that his trousers were wet up to the knees, and that could only be accounted for by the presumption that he had slipped into that particular ditch where the body was found. One man now remembered that he had seen him seated on the side of a dry ditch rubbing something off his clothes, but on being observed he picked up something and slunk away in the direction of Mrs. Philpotts's cottage. The "something" was the parasol with which that woman had met him a little later.

In the course of that morning—the murder was actually committed at about half-past ten—Mrs. Philpotts's little boy put his hand on the prisoner's trousers, and said, "George, your trousers are all wet," and Gilbert had muttered some inaudible explanation. His shirt also was wet and dirty, and, most damaging of all, one of the sleeves had been torn right away. It was found subsequently in the identical ditch,

Often frightened young girls.

proving that the girl had seized it in her struggle and torn it away. Then he had, before entering his lodging, taken off his stockings and hung them on a hedge. All these articles were examined, and it was found that they had been washed, but they still smelt strongly of mud, and on his boots was mud similar to that in the lane. Nor was his own manner reassuring. On being questioned as to his movements on that day, he made use of expressions and remarks which seemed to indicate that he had a consciousness that a great crime would soon be charged against him. He was taken into custody, and after several preliminary examinations was fully committed for trial, the belief in his guilt being general.

The evidence against him, though purely circumstantial, was conclusive, and there is no necessity to go into the details of the trial, which took place at the Winchester Assizes, on the 18th of July, 1862. The case excited enormous interest in the county, and people came from all parts to witness the conviction of the murderer. The prisoner displayed a callous and indifferent demeanour, but pleaded "Not guilty" with great hardihood. The counsel for the defence was only able to comment on the absence of adequate motive, although the evidence showed plain enough what had been the purpose of the prisoner. Counsel asked the jury to believe that Gilbert had, even if guilty of an assault upon the young woman

with a sensual view, no intention to commit murder; that her death was rather a matter of accident than design, and that he did not know at the time that she was being suffocated in the water. But the judge would have none of this. He warned the jury that if they were satisfied that the girl's death was caused, either directly or indirectly, by the act of the prisoner, they must find him guilty of wilful murder. It was clear that he had premeditated the original outrage, and if her death ensued as the result of his efforts in that direction, then he was guilty of her murder. The poor girl had been half strangled as well as suffocated, and that fact did not point to her death being anything in the nature of an accident. The jury took the same view, and, after a very brief consultation, returned into court with a verdict of guilty. In this the judge expressed his full concurrence, and while holding out to the prisoner no hope of mercy in this world, he alluded to the shameful barbarity of his crime, its

formed a certain resolve in regard to her. He used to waylay the girl on all possible occasions, but made no attempt to speak to her before the fatal Sunday.

That morning he got up early, cleaned himself, and went out after his breakfast. He strolled to the moor and sat for some time on the stile. About ten minutes after ten he observed Miss Hall coming from Midgham Farm, and he waited for her to arrive at the stile. She changed colour when she saw him, but said nothing, and he made a clumsy attempt to assist her over the stile, which she resisted. This annoyed him, and he got up and followed her up the lane, talking to her all the time, importuning her to come for a walk with him and even going so far as to make certain propositions. The girl got frightened, but hurried on without looking round or answering her tormentor, who then caught up with her, stopped her, put his arm roughly round her waist, and tried to kiss her. She screamed and resisted with might and

PUT HIS ARM ROUGHLY ROUND HER WAIST.

cowardice and brutality, and implored him while he had yet time to make his peace above. The prisoner was not in the least affected by the solemn address, and grimaced at somebody in the court as he was led away.

He did not long keep up the farce of innocence. One night, shortly after his condemnation, he sent for the chaplain and expressed a wish to make a statement in the shape of a confession, to which he had been repeatedly urged by the minister of religion who attended him. He commenced by giving an account of his life, and stated that he had been led away by bad companions and by reading accounts of highwaymen and penny-horribles, which were very prevalent in the thirties and forties. They made the malefactor a hero, and Gilbert wished to grow up to emulate their deeds, if not their deaths on the gallows. Tempted to thieve, he had his first experience of prison, and so far from that acting as a deterrent, it determined him to wage war upon society, and he became a confirmed and habitual criminal. He went on to say that when he first noticed Mary Hall, he at once

main. Maddened with desire, and deaf to the poor girl's entreaties, the brute dragged her up the lane towards the bank, where a tremendous struggle ensued. By main force he got her on the bank, and threw her down, clutching at her throat to silence her cries. In her efforts to prevent him completing his purpose she had rolled over and had literally been suffocated in the shallow water while he held her down. He was alarmed when he found that she was dead—that death had mercifully preserved her from his brutal clutches—and he dragged the body through the hedge of the bank and cast it down into the ditch, where it was found. He had then cleaned the mud from his clothes as well as he could, and slunk off home. It may be added here that a part of the ornament from the unfortunate girl's bonnet was found on the bank, and about half-way up the lane in the branches was found, as if to corroborate the prisoner's story, one of the tassels of the mantle she was wearing.

The prisoner further stated that he had not contemplated actually murdering the girl when he set out in the morning,

but he had fully intended to commit a rape, and did not much care if the girl died so long as he fulfilled his purpose. After making this confession, Gilbert seemed to consider that he had done quite sufficient to secure forgiveness hereafter, although it may be very strongly doubted if he ever felt anything like sincere repentance. He gave little or no trouble pending his execution, and while seldom referring to his crime, expressed himself as quite content to die.

He was hanged at Winchester on August 4. Large crowds came into the old county town from all parts to watch this brutal murderer go to his well-merited doom, and on all hands was expressed abhorrence of the prisoner and his crime. Gilbert walked with much firmness to the scaffold, maintaining this show of calmness and resignation to the last. He responded to the prayers of the chaplain in a firm, loud voice, and several times said, "Gentlemen, pray for me! Pray for me!" He resigned himself quite calmly to the hangman, and gave a curious look at the crowd assembled to see him die. One face he may have caught sight of there—one face still pale and revengeful. His victim's father had come to Winchester to see them hang the murderer of his poor girl, and it may well have been with those reproachful eyes upon him that the miscreant went to his last account. The lever was pulled, the bolt withdrawn, and George Jacob Gilbert, murderer, went to answer for his sins to his God.

The sad case of Mary Hall is still remembered in this part of Hampshire. The lane in which the victim struggled with the murderer has been pointed out to me, though one or two of the fields have now been largely built upon. Her grave is in Fordingbridge Church, and the villagers love to indicate the spot and tell the stranger of the bright young life so suddenly cut short. But beside the interest of the case itself, there is a very strange and sad sequel to its history, a sequel which, however, belongs to the realms of actual fact. Mary Hall's father took her death terribly to heart. He was a changed man from that day, and refused to be comforted. He would walk for hours between his farm and the church, retracing the steps his girl took on the fatal morning, and gazing long and mournfully at the ditch where her body was discovered. He spent long and weary hours beside her resting-place in the quiet churchyard, and neighbours and friends, who saw how deep and lasting was his grief, predicted that Hall would soon follow Mary to the grave. They were right in their prophecies, but his death happened in the strangest way, and looks like the hand of destiny or fate. Some time after Gilbert's execution, business in connection with his farm took Mr. Hall to Winchester Fair. He had with him a companion, who had vainly endeavoured to induce him to relinquish, for a time, his sense of overpowering grief and irreparable loss, to induce him to forget for a few brief moments his terrible trouble. There was a booth at this fair in which dramatic performances were given—of the very rough-and-ready kind which prevailed even as recently as forty years ago—and in the notion that it might amuse and interest him, his friend insisted on their both going in to witness the performance. One of "the funny men" was going through a recital at the time, and the subject was the murder of Mary Anne Hall! The poor father of the martyred girl was so much affected by this mockery, that he fell down in a fit and died before medical assistance could be obtained. A tragic ending to a tragic story!

On the Nod.

DURING the trial of James Farren for the murder of a farmer named Mackie, in 1846, a witness was examined by the prisoner's counsel, who very often used the words: "assignor and assignee," "lessor and lessee," and at last the lawyer, becoming wearied with the unnecessary repetition of the words, exclaimed: "I question if you know what a lessor or lessee is, for all your formal evidence."

"Yes, sir, I do," replied the witness, "and I give you this instance: if you nod at me you are the nodder, and if I nod at you you are the noddee."

He Knew the Difference.

AT the Liverpool Sessions in 1876, before Mr. J. B. Aspinall, Q.C., the Recorder, a man named William Jenks was tried for assault. One of the witnesses was a musician, and Mr. Henry Shee, prisoner's counsel, described him as a fiddler, which description greatly offended the party, and he said to Mr. Aspinall, "I am not a fiddler, sir; I am a 'musicianer.'"

"And, pray," asked the Recorder, "what is the difference between a musicianer and a fiddler?"

The witness replied, "As much, sir, as there is between a pair of bagpipes and a Recorder." [Note. A "recorder" was the name formerly given to a tenor flute.—ED.]

The Mysterious KINGSWOOD MURDER.

How Johann Carl Franz, who was accused of the crime, was saved from the gallows by an extraordinary chain of coincidences.

"A 'strange coincidence,' to use a phrase,
By which such things are settled nowadays."
—BYRON, "Don Juan" Canto vi.

RATHER less than four miles from Reigate is Kingswood Warren, the seat of the well-known Mr. Henry Cosmo Orme Bonsor, late Member of Parliament for the Wimbledon Division of Surrey; and some quarter of a mile distant from the mansion stands Kingswood Rectory, the scene of a remarkable and mysterious murder, which was perpetrated on the night of Monday, June 10, 1861.

The Rev. S. B. Taylor then held the living of Kingswood, and at the same time at which the tragedy occurred he was away from home with his wife and family on a visit at his father-in-law's near Dorking. He had come over to Kingswood, however, on the evening of Saturday, June 8, to discharge his clerical duties on the Sunday, slept at the Rectory that night, and on the Monday morning returned to Dorking.

During the absence of the family, Martha Halliday, wife of the parish clerk, a woman fifty-five years of age, was left in sole charge of the Rectory, the servants having accompanied their master and mistress.

Between six and seven o'clock on the evening of Monday, June 10, Martha Halliday's husband parted from her at the back door of the Rectory, and went home, for there was no one else to look after his house, and his wife, a courageous and determined woman, had no objection whatever to sleeping alone at the Rectory, as she had frequently done before.

The next morning Halliday went up to the Rectory to see his wife as usual. He found the back door locked, and on going round to the front was surprised to see the door partly open—for as a rule it was kept shut when the family were away. He entered the house, but saw no sign of his wife down stairs. Then he called her name, but there was no reply. So he went upstairs to the bedroom which she occupied. The door was ajar, and the first sight which met his eyes as he walked in was Martha, lying on the floor in her nightdress, cold and stiff, bound hand and foot with hempen cord, a handkerchief tied over her face, and beneath it a sock thrust tightly into her mouth. She had evidently been dead for some hours.

The horrified husband, after ascertaining that no spark of life remained in the body, hurried off and alarmed the neighbours. The parish police-constable was sent for, and a minute search was instituted. But they had not to look far for a clue to the murderer. Under the bed, a few inches from the shoulder of the corpse, as it lay there, a packet of papers was picked up tied round with string. The papers were all written in German. There were six altogether. One was what is called in Germany a service-book—the credentials furnished by the authorities in that country to craftsmen and others—and was made out in the name of Johann Carl Franz, of Schandau, in Upper Saxony, a description of whose person it contained similar to that in a passport. There were also two certificates, one of birth and one of baptism, both bearing the name of Johann Carl Franz.

The other three papers had apparently no connection with Franz. One was a letter, without address, soliciting relief from some lady of quality, signed "Adolphe Krohn." Another, dated June 7, was in the handwriting of Madame Tietjens, the celebrated prima donna of Italian opera, addressed to Mr. Kroll, of the Hamburg Hotel, America Square, requesting him to send the bearer, a destitute fellow-countryman, back to Germany at her expense. The third was a slip of paper with a number of addresses jotted down upon it, among them that of Madame Goldschmidt (Jenny Lind), an even more famous Queen of Song.

Besides the papers there was found in the room a roughly-cut bludgeon of beechwood. This, however, had not been used, for the woman's body bore no marks of blows, though there were signs which indicated that it had been trampled upon. It was evident that Martha Halliday had met her death from suffocation, for the sock or stocking had been thrust into her mouth with such violence that the tongue was forced back over the glottis, or narrow opening at the upper part of the windpipe.

Further investigation outside the house revealed how an entrance had been effected. The footprints on the flower-beds under the windows showed plainly that there had been two persons concerned in the crime. They had first tried the kitchen windows in front, but the shutters had baffled them. Then they had gone to the back, and by the aid of a rough block of wood had mounted to the roof of a low outhouse within reach of the window of the room in which Martha Halliday slept. They had then broken a pane, unfastened the latch, and entered, upsetting a looking-glass which stood on a chest of drawers immediately under the window. No doubt the unfortunate woman had been awakened by the noise, and the men had gagged and bound her. It was equally evident, however, that they in their turn must have been alarmed, for they had decamped without taking anything, not even the woman's purse, which contained a few shillings. But not often has a murderer left behind him such a clue as those papers afforded. For clearly the owner of those damning documents must be the man who committed the crime.

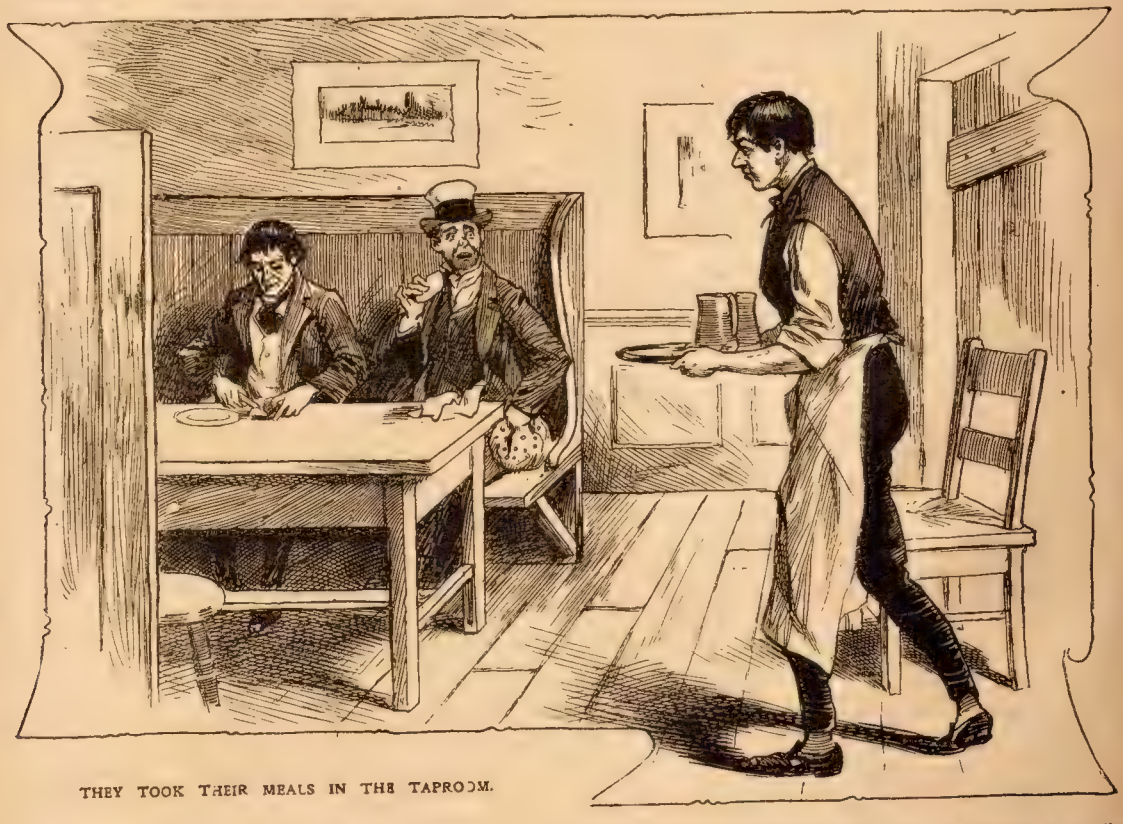
The police, moreover, had this important fact to start upon, that the perpetrators of the murder were Germans. Now, the first question that suggested itself was, of course, this: Had any foreigners been seen near Kingswood on the day of the murder, or so recently that they might have been concerned in it?

To this question there was soon a very satisfactory answer given from several independent quarters.

It was speedily ascertained that about noon on the day before the murder (Sunday, June 9) two foreigners, one short and dark, the other tall and fair, had entered Reigate from the direction of London, and had applied for lodgings at the Cricketers' Inn, which faces the Reigate Police Station. They had been accommodated with a room, and had remained in the house till about four o'clock on the Monday afternoon. During the period of their stay they had only left the inn twice to purchase provisions, and on each occasion had only been absent a few minutes. They took their meals in the taproom, and the potman was positive that he should recognise them both again, because the fact that they spoke in a foreign tongue had induced him to look at them intently. They were under his eyes, so to speak, for several hours. Then came another startling discovery.

The wife of Thomas Pether, a brush-maker at Reigate, remembered that on the Monday (the day of the murder) two foreigners had purchased of her a ball of string of a peculiar make, very seldom manufactured, known as "rublay cord." They were in the shop for five or six minutes looking at various kinds of string before they selected the one they bought. She was looking at them all the while, as they jabbered in an unknown tongue, and should know them both again if she saw them. The servant, too, Mary Elsey, hearing men talking in a strange language, peeped through the glass door of the inner room out of curiosity, and she also was certain she could pick the men out anywhere. Now, this evidence was of immense importance, because the peculiar string sold to the two foreigners corresponded exactly with that with which the murdered woman's hands and feet had been bound.

There was also a good deal of other evidence to show that two foreigners had been in the neighbourhood of Kingswood on the day of the murder. A labourer coming home from his work about seven o'clock that evening had seen two men in a beech thicket, known as Kingswood Roughit. He passed within a dozen yards of them, and noticed that they were talking in a language which he did not understand. This was another important piece of evidence, for on examin-



THEY TOOK THEIR MEALS IN THE TAPROOM.

ing that thicket it was found that a branch had been newly torn from one of the trees which corresponded with the bludgeon found in the room.

Further, a policeman reported having stopped two men about two o'clock on the Tuesday morning at Sutton, that is to say, within three hours of the probable time of the murder, and, on being asked where they were going, one replied in broken English, "To Old Pye Street, Westminster."

With all these clues, dovetailing so beautifully, it seemed impossible that the murderers should escape. Yet all trace of them after they were accosted by the policeman at Sutton was lost. From that point no one could be found who had seen any persons answering to their description.

The excitement in the district was intense. Mr. Alcock, who then resided at Kingswood Warren, and was M.P. for that division of the county, took up the matter with great vigour, and offered a reward of £100 for any information which would lead to the apprehension of the two mysterious foreigners, and the Government supplemented this with a further reward of £100. Yet day after day passed away without the discovery of anything that could throw fresh light on the mystery.

Nearly a month had elapsed when, in the East End of London a destitute German was taken into custody on some trivial charge, and on being examined at the police station it was thought that he bore some resemblance to the description of one of the men "wanted" for the Kingswood murder. The service-book, which, as we have said, was one of the documents found beside the body of the victim, and which contained a full description of Johann Carl Franz, was consulted, and the police had then no doubt that the man in custody was the said Franz. He was, therefore, handed over to the Reigate police, and in due course brought before the local magistrates.

At the first examination the prisoner gave the name of Salzmann. But at the second he caused a profound sensation in court by confessing that he was Johann Carl Franz, the owner of the papers which bore his name. At the third and last examination, on July 8 (the date is important), he told the magistrates a story which, while it maintained his complete innocence of the charge brought against him, attempted to account for the presence of his papers in the room in which the murder had been committed. Of that story more anon. The prisoner, who had been identified by several witnesses as one of the foreigners seen at Reigate on the day of the murder, was committed for trial.

At Croydon Assizes, on August 6, 1861, Johann Carl Franz, aged 24, a German, was indicted for the wilful murder of Martha Halliday, aged 55, at Kingswood Rectory, on June 10 preceding. Mr. Justice Blackburn was the judge, Serjeant Ballantine conducted the prosecution, and the Hon. George Denman, Q.C. (who was afterwards raised to the judicial bench) was specially retained by the Saxon Embassy to defend the prisoner. There was probably not a man in the crowded court, or indeed anywhere in the country, who was not absolutely certain that the prisoner was guilty. The case for the prosecution seemed overwhelming. The main points of the evidence against the accused were these:

First, his identity with Johann Carl Franz, owner of the papers which were found in close proximity to the corpse of the murdered woman. This was proved by his own confession, and also by the evidence of a police-officer from Saxony, who swore to him as being the person to whom the service-book had been issued.

Secondly, his identification, by several independent witnesses, as one of the foreigners who had undoubtedly been close to the scene of the murder within a few hours of its perpetration.

Thirdly, the significant and damning fact that when his lodgings in Whitechapel were searched there was found a woollen shirt, which he admitted to be his, around which was a piece of hempen cord of precisely the same manufacture as that which had been sold to the two foreigners at Reigate on the day of the murder. The manufacturer of that string swore that it was of the same uncommon kind as that with which the hands and feet of the murdered woman had been bound, and he further deposed that the string found on the body was part of a consignment to the shopkeeper of Reigate, who was an old customer of his. He explained the peculiarity of the string, which was unlike that made by any other manufacturer, and no one could doubt that it was impossible he should be mistaken.

Against such a mass of incriminating evidence, the story told by the prisoner seemed a poor and flimsy defence indeed. It was to this effect. He had landed from Germany at Hull, had gone thence through Leeds, Oldham, and Manchester to Liverpool, where he stayed a short time trying to get a passage to America. Failing in this object, he resolved to tramp to London. On his way to the metropolis he fell in with two fellow-countrymen, sailors, the one named Adolphe Krohn, the other a man of about his own stature and complexion, named William Gerstenberg.

Gerstenberg had no papers, and was perpetually asking Franz for the loan of his, as the description, he said, would very well suit either or both of them. Franz refused.

One evening in May they all three lay down to sleep behind a stack of straw in an open field. Franz was so weary that he slept soundly.

When he awoke his companions were gone, and they had taken with them his papers and his bag, which contained a suit of clothes of the same stuff and pattern as he was then wearing. From that hour he had never set eyes on either of them.

Among the papers which Franz declared had been stolen from him was one which was not found among the documents discovered at Kingswood Rectory; it was a railway-guard's testimonial.

After being thus robbed, he made his way to London,

He was dreadfully alarmed.

where he wandered the streets in a state of destitution till he met a fellow-countryman, whom he accosted and asked for assistance. The man took him into an eating-house, and, whilst he was having his meal, read to him from a newspaper the account of a murder, the perpetrator of which was supposed to be a German named Johann Carl Franz. He was dreadfully alarmed on hearing this, and resolved to assume another name; for that reason he called himself Salzmann.

As to the piece of string found round his shirt, he had picked that up casually in the street, and had never been in or near Reigate in his life.

Where was he, then, at the time the murder was committed? He could not tell, but he must have been tramping on the road to London. He could not, however, prove an alibi, and there was no evidence but his own assertion that he had not been in the neighbourhood of Reigate at the time when several witnesses swore to having seen him there.

It is hardly to be wondered at that this unsatisfactory story did not tend in the least to lessen the conviction of his guilt, which everyone who had been present at his examination before the magistrate firmly entertained.

Yet in the cross-examination of the witnesses for the prosecution there were some points which told in his favour. The potman at the Cricketers, who had undoubtedly had a better opportunity of observing him closely than anyone else, failed twice to pick him out from among a number of men paraded before him at Newgate. And it was not until

he was called as a witness at the third examination before the magistrates that he positively declared that the prisoner, whom he then saw before him, was one of the two foreigners who had stayed at the Cricketers.

Another witness, Josiah Lock, swore positively that the prisoner was one of two foreigners whom he met at four o'clock on the Sunday afternoon four miles from Reigate. Now the evidence of the potman was conclusive that the two foreigners at the Cricketers did not leave the inn all that day, and he professed to identify Franz as one of them. If the potman was right, Lock must be mistaken, and vice versâ.

The woman who sold the string would not swear positively to Franz, though she thought he was like the taller of the two foreigners; but the servant girl, who had not so good an opportunity of judging, had no doubt whatever that Franz was the man.

Madame Tietjens, whose first description of the man who had obtained the letter from her seemed to tally with that of Franz, when confronted with the prisoner at once said that he was not the person who had called upon her and who gave his name as Adolphe Krohn. Still, this did not prove that Franz might not have been Krohn's partner in the crime.

But there was something yet to come which fairly staggered the jury. The prisoner's attorney, who previously to his being instructed to take up the case for the defence had acted as interpreter before the magistrates, was called as a witness by the prosecution. In the course of his examination he was questioned as to his knowledge of Franz's handwriting, and a manuscript book was suddenly put into his hands with the question from counsel:

"Is this the prisoner's handwriting?"

The attorney, not knowing what was being sprung upon him, but recognising at once that the handwriting was that of Franz, answered hastily, "Yes."

Counsel for the defence asked to look at the book, and found that it was a diary of his adventures in England kept by the prisoner. Each day's incidents were faithfully recorded until he reached Leek, in Staffordshire, when the narrative abruptly closed. The extraordinary fact was elicited that this book had been found on July 9 (the day after the prisoner had told his story to the magistrates) by a couple of tramps, on a heap of straw in a roadside hovel on the borders of Northamptonshire, and with it a railway guard's testimonial, which was one of the papers that Franz alleged to have been stolen from him. This was a most singular corroboration of at any rate one important part of the prisoner's story.

But there was yet another extraordinary coincidence to be adduced in his favour. In regard to the damning piece of string found attached to his shirt, Franz's explanation was that he had picked it up on the pavement in front of a tobacconist's in Whitechapel. This seemed a scarcely credible story until, in the cross-examination of the prisoner's attorney by the counsel for the defence—for this witness, it must be remembered, was called by the prosecution—it came out that the tobacconist's shop was but two minutes' walk from Franz's lodgings and close to the premises of the very string-maker who had manufactured the peculiar "rublay cord" which had been supplied to the Reigate tradesman. The prisoner's attorney said that he himself had seen a ball of string of precisely similar manufacture lying on the types at a printing office next door to the tobacconist's, where it was habitually used.

No direct evidence was offered for the defence, because the prisoner's counsel would not in that case have had the inestimable advantage of addressing the jury without a reply from the prosecution. And in his powerful speech, which lasted four hours, Mr. Denman pressed home the force of these striking coincidences in corroboration of the prisoner's story with irresistible effect. The judge, too, laid considerable stress upon them in his summing up, and the end of it was that the jury, after a long deliberation, returned a verdict of not guilty, though it subsequently transpired that at first ten of them had been in favour of a verdict of guilty.

Yet who can doubt that if the tramps had not found the diary and the testimonial—and if the prisoner's attorney had not shown that the string-maker's manufactory was close to the spot in which the prisoner picked up the piece of string—which at first was thought to be such damning evidence against him—who can doubt, we say, that but for these almost miraculous coincidences Johann Carl Franz would have been found guilty and have paid the penalty of his life? Not often has this danger of trusting to purely circumstantial evidence been so conclusively proved.

After the acquittal of Franz the police appear to have made no further effort to solve the Kingswood mystery, and the murder of Martha Halliday is numbered among the crimes which have baffled the avenging hand of justice.

The present writer was an intimate college friend of the rector of Kingswood's son, and we have many a time discussed the mysterious murder in our Cambridge rooms. The son, like his father, inclined to the belief that Johann Carl Franz was the real murderer, and that he only got off through clever juggling of the evidence by his able counsel. But everyone who has read carefully the foregoing story must, we think, admit that Johann Carl Franz's statement of his innocence was sufficiently well supported to justify the jury in acquitting him. It is a pity, however, that the police should have made no further attempt to solve some of the problems connected with the murder. The reader will have doubtless noticed that the evidence pointed to the curious fact that there must have been two distinct pairs of foreigners in the neighbourhood of Kingswood at the time of the murder. Yet all the efforts of the police to trace these foreigners after they left Reigate, where witnesses saw and spoke to them, utterly failed. The policeman at Sutton, indeed, who stopped the two strangers within three hours of the perpetration of the crime, thought the men were foreigners, but was not sure on the point, and one may therefore assume that these two pairs of foreigners, one or other of which must have been concerned in the murder, reached London unchallenged and unobserved, and were lost for ever, so far as justice was concerned, among the teeming millions of the Metropolis. This seems to us not the least remarkable of the many strange circumstances which invest with a peculiar interest the unsolved mystery of the Kingswood murder.

The JUDGE and JURY

PART IV.

WHAT STATEMENTS ARE ADMISSIBLE AS EVIDENCE.—*Continued.*

OUR last article dealt with confining witnesses to saying what is "relevant." We also enunciated the law as to best evidence. We shall now deal further with that point. The meaning of the rule is that no evidence can have any weight if it leads us to suppose that other and better evidence remains behind, inasmuch as the production of such inferior evidence suggests that there is some secret or sinister motive for withholding the better and more satisfactory evidence. The rule is more strictly enforced with regard to documentary evidence than with regard to oral evidence, and is usually applied in the form of the two well-known sub-rules: (1) That a verbal account of the contents of a document can never be accepted if the document itself be obtainable; (2) that, subject to certain exceptions, a copy of the document is not admissible when the original document can be produced. In these cases the document itself is said to be "primary," whilst the verbal account, or the copy, is called "secondary" evidence. Well, such Acts of Parliament as the Bankers' Books Evidence Act, 1879, have modified these sub-rules, which still apply in all their intensity to private documents. Now there is one perennial "chestnut" dearly loved of penny-a-liners who live by trading off "funny" anecdotes dealing with "red-tape." A paymaster who pays pensions requires a "life certificate" to show that the recipient has not died and is not being personated by someone else, after the fashion of George Washington's monthly nurse, who was such a great draw with Barnum's Show when she was nearing her second century. These "funny" story tellers narrate how paymasters tragically write: "You have sent me a statement that you were alive on June 30th; I want a statement that you were alive on May 31st." The paymaster is not yet born who gave a cheque without all the

necessary documents in the form of "life certificates," or what not.

Now the rule as to "best evidence" has no application to the difference between direct and indirect evidence. Direct evidence is not better than indirect or circumstantial evidence, the difference between them being not one of degree, but one of kind. From the circumstances under which crimes are ordinarily committed, it follows that direct evidence of their commission is rarely obtainable, and that in the great majority of cases reliance must be placed on circumstantial evidence. "Facts cannot lie," has become a proverb, while witnesses may (and do) lie. But facts can deceive; the interpretation they appear to suggest may be one that ought not to be placed upon them. Before a prisoner is found guilty on circumstantial evidence, a jury must be satisfied not only that the circumstances are consistent with the prisoner's guilt, but that they are inconsistent with any other rational conclusion than that the prisoner was the guilty person. The facts on which it is sought to found the inference of guilt must be visibly and evidently connected with the crime. A law-book quotes two groups of facts, of which the first would not, while the second would, constitute convincing circumstantial evidence of a crime:

1.—The accused was a man of bad general character.

2.—He belonged to a nation characteristically regardless of human life.

3.—He narrowly escaped conviction on a charge of murder some years before.

4.—There is a strong feeling between his nation and that of deceased.

5.—He was heard to make exclamations in his sleep indicating a consciousness of having committed some terrible deed.

6.—The deceased was robbed, and the accused is proved to be notoriously greedy about money.

With all due respect to the writer of "The Dumb Man of Manchester," and melodramas generally, it is hardly necessary to say that if such a series of circumstances were prolonged ad infinitum it would fail to produce in a sane mind a conviction that the accused was guilty. There is no visible ligamen between these facts and the fact sought to be established, that the accused committed the murder. All the facts are perfectly consistent with his innocence. Contrast such circumstances with such as usually turn up in strong cases of circumstantial evidence. Take the following series of facts:

1.—The deceased was found apparently murdered by a pistol bullet, which penetrated the skull.

2.—On the ground near the body was found a small fragment of a newspaper, which smelled strongly of burnt powder, and led to the supposition that it had been used in separating the powder from the ball; on the prisoner being arrested there was found another piece of newspaper which corresponded minutely at the point where it was torn with that found near the body of the deceased.

3.—In a pond near the scene of the murder was found a pistol, which had evidently been only recently thrown into the water, and into which the bullet fitted.

4.—The pistol was proved to have belonged to a gentleman in the neighbourhood; but it also appeared that the prisoner was a servant in his employment, and that the pistol was missed the day before the murder from among several fowling-pieces, pistols, powder-flasks, and other articles connected with the paraphernalia of the sportsman, which were arranged in a small room in the gentleman's house devoted to the purposes of sport. It was a part of the prisoner's duty to keep this room and its contents in order.

5.—When asked whether he ever saw the pistol, he denied it.

6.—On the prisoner were found two bank-notes, which were proved to have been given to the deceased in part payment for a horse sold by him to a neighbour.

The first of these facts at once suggests suspicion against the accused. As the second and subsequent circumstances are disclosed, the suspicion becomes intensified; and, as the narrative goes on, the strong apparent connection between the facts and the crime rapidly culminates, until, even before the last of them is reached, the climax of moral certainty is attained, and the mind is forced to accept the conclusion that the accused was the perpetrator of the crime.

The rule which requires production of the best obtainable evidence does not require the strongest possible assurance; in other words, does not require the fullest proof of which the case will admit, nor the repetition of evidence beyond that which is sufficient to establish the fact. For instance, it is not necessary, in order to prove handwriting, to call the writer himself; nor, if a whole regiment should be present at some overt act of mutiny or insubordination, as the striking a commanding officer in front of his regiment, would the law require the production of all the persons present; for if one witness only were produced, and if, from his situation at the moment of the occurrence, he had as favourable an opportunity of observing what took place as any person present, his evidence would be complete, and not inferior in kind to any that could be produced.

The testimony of one reliable witness suffices subject to statutory exceptions in the case of treason and treason-felony, and to the exception that in a trial for perjury one witness alone is not sufficient, without some material and corroborative evidence in proof of the statement as to which the perjury is charged, because otherwise there is only the oath of one witness against the oath of the person accused. The evidence of a single accomplice is in law sufficient, but such evidence must be received with extreme caution, and, unless corroborated, should not be accepted as proof of a prisoner's guilt.

Here is a true story. An officer was drunk, rolling in the gutter, dressed in uniform. He was picked up by a civilian, who handed him over to a senior brother officer, who placed him under arrest till he was tried by general court-martial. In the statement of evidence there was the story by the civilian who had picked the officer up. This was in the dossier, as the French call it. But at the trial the prosecutor wished to spare the civilian the unpleasantness of having to give evidence against an officer. There was plenty of evidence for a conviction, but as soon as the prosecutor had uttered the words, "The prosecution is closed," the "prisoner's friend" was up like an Old Baile barrister.

"Where is the best evidence? In the dossier we have the statement of Mr. X, who declared that he found the prisoner rolling in the gutter. Why did not the prosecution call Mr. X? Because it dare not. The whole evidence is tainted." Et cetera, et cetera.

The rule about "best evidence" is like one of the laws of the Medes and Persians. That prisoner was acquitted!

Leaves from Our Notebook.

She Could Fly.

In the year 1783 Jane Wenham was tried before Mr. Justice Powell, at Gloucester, on a charge of witchcraft. It was asserted by several witnesses for the prosecution that she could fly, and this was considered proof of her being a witch.

The Judge asked the prisoner: "Prisoner, can you fly?"

"Yes, my lord," was the reply.

"Well, then," said the judge, "you may; there is no law against flying." And he instructed the jury to bring in a verdict of "Not Guilty," and this, in spite of her own confession.

The Hanging Judge's Boast.

Judge Jeffreys, the brutal "Hanging Judge," once boasted, on his return from the Bloody Assize in the Western Circuit, that he had hanged more people than all the judges of England put together since William the Conqueror.

He once asked a military officer how many men he had killed during the same troubles, and the officer replied, "About a thousand." "Well," said the judge, "I believe I have condemned as many as that myself."

They Were Both Impertinent.

In the year 1875 there were two counsel on the Northern Circuit, both noted for their impertinence. One was ill-natured and rough-tongued, and piqued himself on this very quality. One day he hailed the other congenial spirit in the barrister's room at St. George's Hall, and said to him, "Mr. K., I'll bet you a sovereign that you are a more impertinent rascal than I am." To which the other replied, "You'd win your bet; I am certainly the more impertinent. You are only impertinent to those who you know won't knock you down for it, but I am impertinent to everybody, big and little."

A Diabolical Murderer.

A MAN named Thomas Austin was executed at Exeter in the year 1723 (?) for a series of the most barbarous murders ever heard of in the annals of crime.

He was born of very respectable parents, who left him a farm worth about £80 per annum, and he received with his wife a small fortune of about £800; but instead of improving his farm with the cash which he had received, he squandered it in every kind of debauchery. Nor was it long before he was compelled to mortgage his own property. This money went in the same manner as his wife's portion, and, being reduced to poverty, he betook himself to the highway, robbed Sir Zachary Wilmot, between Wellington and Tauntondean, and barbarously murdered him for making some resistance. His booty was forty-six guineas and a silver-hilted sword. This money being spent, he went to visit his uncle, who lived about a mile distant from Austin's house. He found that his uncle was absent, and sitting down to keep the family company until his return, he suddenly seized a hatchet, cleft the skull of his aunt, cut the throats of five small children, laid them all in a heap, and robbed the house of sixty pounds.

Returning to his wife, she noticed some drops of blood upon his neckcloth, and inquired the cause. He replied, "I'll show the manner of it," and, pulling out the bloody razor, cut her throat from ear to ear. He then ripped up the bowels of his two children, the elder of which was not three years old. Scarcely had he completed the diabolical deeds when his uncle accidentally came to visit him, and, beholding the horrible sight, instantly seized the monster, and, after a terrific struggle, carried him before a magistrate, who committed him to Exeter Gaol.

If the feelings of the uncle were severely wounded at beholding the first deed of blood, how agonising must they have been when he went home, to behold all his own family weltering in their gore!

The mind shudders at the relation of such unheard-of barbarity, to the perpetration of which nothing appears to have excited the unnatural wretch, except the gratification of his own inhuman temper. Austin suffered death for his atrocities, and continued sullen and hardened to the last.

When the rope was about his neck, the clergyman asked him if he had anything to say before he died. "Nothing," replied he; "only there's a woman yonder with some curds and whey, and I wish I could have a pennyworth of them before I am hanged, because I don't know when I shall see any again."

He Had "Nae Doot" About It.

IN the year 1787 a baillie, of the Gorbals, Glasgow, a justice of the peace, was trying a youth named Robert Macduff for stealing a pocket-handkerchief. After the charge had been read, and the prisoner had pleaded "Not guilty," the baillie addressed the youth as follows: "I hae nae doot ye did the deed, for I had a handkerchief ta'en oot o' my ain pootch this vera week." He then proceeded to pass sentence without hearing any witnesses or troubling counsel further.

What She Would Take.

AT the Durham Assizes, in the year 1872, an action was tried before Mr. Justice Cave, which was brought by one neighbour against another for a very trifling matter which the judge thought ought to be settled between the parties without an appeal to the jury, and Mr. Justice Cave suggested that the plaintiff's counsel should ask his client to compromise it, and instructed him to ask her what she would accept in settlement of her claim. The plaintiff was a very deaf old lady, and counsel shouted out very loudly to her: "His lordship wants to know what you will take?"

To which the old lady immediately replied, "I thank his lordship kindly, and, if it's no ill-convenience to him, I'll take a little warm ale."

Answers to Correspondents

The Editor will be pleased to answer any suitable questions.

M. B. (Edinburgh).—The criminal William Duell, who was hanged at Tyburn in November, 1740, revived when the doctors began to dissect him, three hours after he had been turned off. Possibly this is the man you write about.

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